THE COMMUNIST

Vol. XI JUNE, 1932 No. 6

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THE COMMUNIST

A Magazine of the Theory and Practice of Marxism-Leninism

Published Monthly by the

Communist Party of the United States of America

Entered as second class matter November 2, 1927, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879.

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The Imperialist Offensive and the Fourteenth Plenum of the Central Committee

THE Communist Party of the United States of America must now in *a short space of time* equip itself to carry out the most decisive tasks it has ever confronted in the twelve years of its existence.

Imperialist war is raging in the Far East. The seizure of Manchuria by Japanese imperialism, the slaughter of Chinese soldiers, workers and peasants defending Shanghai, the mass butchery of civilians, men, women and children, mark the beginning of a new imperialist world war for the redivision of China and a subjugation of the Soviet Union on whose eastern and western frontiers imperialist armies are massed. Already mobilization of Polish and Rumanian armies has been followed by the setting up of a state of seige in their frontier areas. Their munition factories work night and day.

No effort is spared to form the imperialist world front. The sharpening imperialist contradictions and the growing world wide instability of capitalism themselves impel the imperialists to see war against the Soviet Union as a way out of the world crisis.

Imperialist war has *begun*. Imperialist *world* war impends. We witness the massacre of thousands of Communists, of Chinese workers and peasants in Manchuria and Shanghai, while defending their country and the liberation movement from the imperialist invaders, the widespread military suppression of the national liberation movement in China. The massacre of workers and peasants in Latin America and Africa, show clearly that this war, like the last war, and all other imperialist wars, is directed against the proletariat and the oppressed national minorities, semi-colonial and colonial peoples.

The supreme test for Communist Parties is the struggle against imperialist war.

The Communist Party of the United States faces this test. It is not yet equipped to meet this test.

The purpose of the 14th Plenum and its resolution is to put the whole Party on a war footing—to enable it to play a *decisive*

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part in the mobilization of the American working class against imperialist war—for the defense of the Chinese people and the Soviet Union—without another moment's delay.

The consolidation of the Soviet power headed by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the building of Socialism with its corollary of continued improvement of the economic and cultural position of the masses, the abolition of unemployment, the magnificent success of the first five year plan, drive the imperialists to frenzied hatred and attacks that know no bounds except the power of the revolutionary working class to check and frustrate their war plots, plans and acts.

Never before have the class lines been so clearly drawn throughout the entire world!

American capitalism is in the worst crisis in its history. So is world capitalism. Side by side with the continual and rapid downward trend of production and exchange and the impact of the credit crisis throughout the capitalist world, there is the upsurge of the working class in the capitalist countries and the rise of the national liberation revolutions in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. (China, India, sections of Latin America.)

The living and social standards of the entire American working class have been lowered by more than 50 per cent in the last three years through mass unemployment, wage cuts and part time work —the Hoover stagger plan. Production continues to decline, unemployment increases daily. The army of unemployed has grown to some *12,000,000.*

The government of Wall Street imperialism, headed by Hoover, has not spent one single dollar for unemployment relief.

Hundreds of thousands of farmers are ruined and reduced to pauperism.

The Republican and Democratic parties have entered into a closer coalition against the American workers and farmers. In Congress their leaders unite to put over a taxation program which raises the price of practically every article needed by the toiling masses of the population. Inflation of the currency, through a variety of measures, like the Finance Reconstruction Corporation, the legalizing for bank loans of formerly unacceptable securities, the power given to the Federal Reserve banks to issue currency against treasury certificates, have the result also of raising prices for the masses of the industrial and agrarian population.

At the same time the "progressives" of both parties vie with the Socialists and A. F. of L. leaders in demagogic deception of the working class and poor farmers.

New giant mergers of already huge corporations and banks are

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authorized and carried through, still further centralizing the control of industry and finance in the hands of the biggest capitalists, working directly through their own agents, like Ogden Mills, Secretary of the Treasury, Lamont of the House of Morgan, Secretary of the Department of Commerce, etc.

Huge sums are given to the railways and industrial corporations, but not one cent for the 12,000,000 unemployed.

In spite of the extraordinary measures taken, designed to restore the stability of American capitalism, its perspective for the future is one of the utmost pessimism.

The situation in iron and steel, the primary industry of American capitalism, is typical and furnishes a basis for an estimate of the present economic status and the immediate future. The *New York Evening Post*, the organ of Lamont and semi-official spokesman of the government, said on April 18th:

> "Further retrenchment of American industry by way of wage cuts, dividend reductions and operating economies lie ahead in the near future. . . . Myron C. Taylor, chairman of the Board of Directors of the United States Steel Corporation, told stockholders . . . that operations of the great company were only at 20 per cent of capacity, and 'it is obvious that operations cannot be profitable at 20 per cent of capacity.' This distinct warning concerning the dividend policy was coupled with a hint that present conditions probably dictated a further reduction in wage and salary schedules of the company. 'Salaries and wages were lowered last autumn. All were cut a minimum of 10 per cent,' said Mr. Taylor. 'The question of wages is a vital one to industry. . . . Those who study these questions of industry have varying views on these subjects. In view of the conditions existing the facts must be faced. We all like to hear happy reports of high operations, increased earnings and large buying power of the mill worker, but these are now lacking. *A prophecy for the future is quite out of order.*' " (Our emphasis.)

The onslaught on the working class is unparalleled in American history. Special terror in the form of legal murder, organized gang murders and lynchings, both in the North and the South, has been unleashed against the Negro masses. Foreign born workers, especially in the heavy industrial districts, are systematically intimidated, terrorized and deported, the total number of deportations in the last year being more than 20,000. No effort is spared to divide the ranks of the working class—to create a division between the employed and unemployed workers, between Negro and white, between native and foreign born.

There is no strike or unemployment demonstration from which toll is not taken amounting to thousands of arrests and the railroading of militant workers to prison under criminal syndicalism and other suppressive laws for long terms.

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American imperialism prepares for war, to establish its rule throughout the world as against that of the rising power of the Soviet Union, its Socialist construction, and against its imperialist rivals. The drive against the working class is the most important part of this preparation for war which at the same time is designed to reduce the working class to hitherto unheard of low levels of living, to flood the world market with goods produced by American workers whose "high American standard of living" has been replaced by a slave standard.

The American working class, in the words of Comrade Manuilsky at the 11th Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, *"is being Europeanized"* on the basis of the *new low* levels of living and social conditions forced upon European workers by the "Americanization" process supported enthusiastically by the Socialist parties.

The American working class today makes the greatest demands upon our Party in the twelve years of its existence. Our Party is not yet in the position to fulfiill these demands or even a substantial part of them. The central purpose of the main resolution of the 14th Plenum, and of the resolution on strike strategy and tactics, is to close this gap between the needs of the working class and the capacity of our Party to fulfill them in this decisive epoch, "the period of wars and revolutions," as described by Lenin. *To fail to do this means to surrender the leadership of the working class to fascism and social fascism.*

The present period is marked by unexampled activity and floods of demagogy from the leadership of the American Federation of Labor, the Socialist Party, the Musteites and the whole crew of renegades including Lore, Lovestone and Cannon. The increase of their activity as the crisis deepens is testimony to the need for American imperialism to utilize every instrument at hand for splitting the ranks of the working class, creating dissension and confusion, attacking the Communist Party in America and the Communist International, discrediting the Soviet Union and thereby weakening the working class front in the face of imperialist war and the unparalleled offensive against the living standards of the toiling population.

The 14th Plenum resolution therefore places as the main political task the struggle against social fascism as a prerequisite for the "successful mobilization of the masses in the fight against the bourgeois offensive and the war danger." The resolution states:

> "In this situation American social fascism (American Federation of Labor, Socialist Party, particularly the Muste wing, with the

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> Lovestone-Cannon renegades) are greatly increasing their activity to carry out the imperialist policy of the bourgeoisie, trying, by establishing the most skillful, deceptive division of work, to divert the radicalized workers from the class struggle against the offessive of the capitalists, to split the ranks of the workers and to bring about their defeat. This confronts the Communist Party with the task of increasing, sharpening and improving its fight against social-fascism as the main enemy in the struggle for the successful mobilization of the masses in the fight against the bourgeois offensive and the war danger."

The resolutions reiterate in the sharpest and, at the same time, in the most concrete and detailed form the Leninist slogan of the Communist International: "*Go to the masses!*" The main resolution, in estimating the work of the Party as a whole, emphasizes the failure of the Party to *really* make the turn to mass work as repeatedly demanded by the E.C.C.I. The resolution states:

> "Although the Party has recognized the necessity of this turn, and although the Party can show a number of successes, in the attempt to carry out the turn in practice (strikes, Scottsboro, Hunger March) *the work of the Party fundamentally remains in the same groove.*"
>
> "Sectarianism and a deep-rooted formalism in the respective Party organs have been the chief obstacles to overcoming the 'inner orientation' of the Party and to achieve the task to further root itself in the decisive industries by means of solid personal contacts with the workers."

The resolution, and this is of the *greatest* significance for the entire Party, places the emphasis on *elementary tasks* which are prerequisites for becoming a Bolshevik Party, rather than on criticism of actions and campaigns in which the Party has engaged. It is precisely the development of a certain self-satisfaction, "Communist vanity" as has been termed by the E.C.C.I., consisting in the overestimation of spectacular achievements and at the same time failure to understand and put into practice the whole series of good resolutions calling for basing the Party solidly in the decisive sections of heavy industry, which even showed itself still in our 13th Plenum in the statement that the Party had begun to make this historic turn, that accounts in a large measure for the neglect of the elementary and primary but highly political tasks of establishing "solid personal contacts with the workers."

Therefore, up to the present time, as the resolution states: "The Party appears before the masses as a Party *for* the workers, and not a Party *of* the workers."

The result is that in the Party work there has developed a *dangerously* formal and sectarian approach to all questions that lays

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a deadening hand upon the whole w/ :k of the Party. The resolution characterizes this as follows:

> "The bureaucratic methods of work, which are expressed in the 'circular letter' method of leadership, and in an excessive number of paid functionaries at the head of the Party and the auxiliary organizations, paralyzes the work of the lower Party organizations, and sidetracks them from genuine mass work on to 'inner' Party and routine work, and hinders the development of cadres and the initiative of the lower organizations. The Party has not yet established collective leadership nor genuinely functioning apparatus in the lower organizations, and has the tendency to conduct the work only through individual organizers."

Factory work must become the key note in the mobilization of the masses for struggle against the capitalist offensive. Concentration on the decisive industries must become the means of overcoming the isolation from the decisive sections of the American working class. The entire Party must grasp the full significance of the following section of the resolution which states:

> "*The main basis of the work and development of the lower Party organizations is the work in the factory.* Up to now the Party has not found fit methods for carrying on this work. The content of this work is not merely organizational detailed routine, but is the whole struggle against the capitalist offensive and against the policy of reformists. The first essential condition for successful work in the factory is *daily contact* with the masses of workers in it and *thorough knowledge* of the position of the workers in the factory and of the concrete conditions for struggle." (Emphasis in the resolution.)

These sections of the main resolutions explain why the many substantial achievements of our Party and the great loyalty, energy and self-sacrifice of our members have failed to bring decisive results in terms of breaking down our isolation from the decisive sections of the American proletariat, Negro and white, and in terms of mass organization and a continual increase in the number of important mass struggles with our Party at the head.

* * *

There is not the slightest doubt that large sections of the working class have faith in the revolutionary integrity of our Party. There is no doubt that they recognize in the Communist Party the only revolutionary Party of the working class. There is no doubt that they see in our Party the staunchest defender of the Soviet Union. But these workers do not see and feel our Party in the place where the revolutionary movement must have its base, the place where it must recruit, organize and train the decisive battalions of the

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proletariat for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship—that is, the working class does not see and feel our Party in its day to day struggle in the industries, does not see and feel our Party inseparably connected and working in the revolutionary solving of the day to day problems, now of an ever more acute character as a result of the deeping crisis and sharpening capitalist offensive which it has to face.

The longer we continue with the formal acceptance of correct resolutions, the longer we are urged on by "Communist vanity" to overestimate the achievements, the longer we remain isolated from the decisive sections of the working class, the longer we carry through in a bureaucratic and sectarian manner the Leninist line of "*go to the masses*"—the more difficult it becomes to break through the vicious circle.

It is for these reasons that the main resolution of the 14th Plenum had to reverse the estimate made by the 13th Plenum that we had made the "first beginnings" in regard to our overcoming the isolation from the *decisive* sections of the American working class and the rising tide of the class struggle. We had remained "in the same groove."

It was necessary to shock and jar the entire Party, from the Central Committee to the smallest unit of the Party, into the most rapid realization of the danger to the working class, to our Party and to the Communist International, inherent in the continuing isolation of our Party from the decisive masses of the working class in the most powerful imperialist country in the world, in this period when imperialist war is already in progress and the evidences of the military plots for the invasion of the Soviet Union and the partitioning of China among the imperialist powers is to be seen on all sides.

It is necessary that the whole Party be steeped and saturated with a knowledge of the decisive significance of the present moment.

> "The situation since the time of the Thirteenth Plenum is characterized by the fact that war clouds have gathered, *that we stand on the eve of a world war, and that this challenges the Party with the necessity for drastic transformation of its entire methods of work and challenges it to change the situation which has existed within the Party. The Party is not mobilized, has not been mobilized, has not been organized for this historical role and it is the purpose of the resolution to steel the Party, to equip it, to be able to stand the blows of a war and to strengthen the Party so it is able to fulfill the task of being an active and determining factor in the outcome of war, to mobilize the forces of the Party and the working class to prevent the outbreak of a new world slaughter and if we fail in that, to transform successfully the imperialist war into a*

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civil war." (From the report of Comrade Weinstone for the Political Bureau.)

It is in connection with this historical task that the setting up of "*solid personal contacts with the workers*" is all-important. The The organization of the working class, both for the daily struggles which lay the base for the decisive mass struggles, and which themselves are an inseparable part of the struggle against imperialist war, *cannot be carried out if this fundamental requirement is not secured.* Neither can we develop the class consciousness of the masses, raise the struggles to a higher political level and give the working class revolutionary political training without the "*solid personal contacts*" — *the complete reverse of sectarianism and formalism.*

It is only when the Party is based solidly in the decisive industries that these detachments of the revolutionary army can be dispatched to organize the class front in all directions and only by "*solid personal contacts*" in the factories, mines and mills and railways and the unceasing activity of our Party, that "class political consciousness may be acquired by the workers" and the tempo of struggle needed at the present moment secured.

The resolution declared, after the most careful examination of the work of our Party:

> "The Party must give careful attention in all its work to the application of the correct mass policy. The correct mass policy consists in developing the mass struggles of the workers, the working men and young workers, on the basis of their immediate economic and political needs, as they arise from their life and work, and conflicts with the employers, reformist bureaucrats, the state, etc. This means, furthermore, that these mass struggles must be carried through on the basis of the activity of the masses, and that the tasks of the Communists are precisely *to develop and organize this activity and initiative of the masses.* This calls for the most concrete application of the united frint from below in accordance with the varying degree of influence of the Communists, the extent of the radicalization of the workers, the influence of the social fascists, etc., thus applying the line of independent policy not mechanically, but on the basis of a careful analysis of the concrete conditions of work and of struggle."
>
> "Inseparably linked up with this and as a basic prerequisite of our entire mass work, *is persistent struggle against the fascist and social fascist leaders of the American Federation of Labor and against the Socialist Party, and particularly the left social fascists.*"

* * *

It is necessary for the successful and rapid carrying through of the line of the two resolutions of our 14th Plenum that more intensive study of the experiences of the Communist Party of the

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Soviet Union should be made. This is especially necessary in regard to putting into practice the establishing of *"solid personal contacts with workers"* and basing the Party firmly in decisive industries, especially in the four heavy industrial concentration districts—Pittsburgh, Chicago, Cleveland and Detroit—that the influence and actual leadership of our Party grows rapidly and our ability both to mobilize our Party and the working class for decisive struggle *is immensely increased* in the shortest possible space of time.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1920 wrote to all Party organizations in regard to the relation of the Party to non-Party workers. This letter said:

> "Our problem is to strengthen the ties between the Communists and the non-Party masses at all costs. This is the only way to put life into our Party groups which at times become passive. *Anyone who cannot rally several honest non-Party people around himself is not a Communist.* He should come into daily contact with non-Party people, visit their homes, and then in their daily lives supply them with literature, send non-Party workers into the trade unions, assist the non-Party workers to take responsible posts in the trade unions. The Party must help the non-Party members do it."

Lenin wrote very much on this same question. In his *"Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disease,* he put this question in the clearest possible form:

> "Communists should penetrate into the humblest tavern, should find their way into the unions, social and chance gatherings of the common people and talk with them, not learnedly, not so much after a parliamentary fashion."

Comrade Schwernik, Secretary of the All Union Trade Unions, speaking at the 8th Plenum of the R.I.L.U. on the relations of the Party members to non-Party workers described the methods by which the Russian Communists carry out the work in the factories. He said:

> "We nurse the non-Party workers. We visit them in their homes and give them our newspapers, we were not too proud to worry about an individual worker, because it was in this way that we forged a body of militants.
>
> "But what have we got now? We may hear such talk as this in a number of sections of the Red International of Labor Unions. 'If there is a gathering of a thousand workers, I will speak, but if there are only one hundred persons, then it is not worth worrying about. This will not do. You have to create your body of militants one by one. These units are not enrolled all at once, but later on they will be harnessed for the workers. Therefore, the question of educating the individual worker is highly important.

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> The practice of factory committees should not be to come forward openly in a body so that all the members find themselves outside the factory gates all at once. This would be a sign of cowardice. This is not merely a question of cowardice—this is a question of the ability to work."

A vital necessity now in carrying out the directives of the Plenum resolutions is the organization of our fractions in the important unions and the working out together with rank and file A. F. of L. union members a concrete program of action, which, when applied, we can expect to result in important mass struggles against the bureaucracy and the bosses with our comrades in the lead.

* * *

The main resolution states that: "The radical improvement of the situation in the revolutionary unions is the key task of the Party." Even more than in the Party itself it is necessary that our comrades in the unions make an end to formal and sectarian methods of work. Here, too, it is necessary in the spirit of the resolution, to carry through a decisive struggle against opportunistic underestimation of the will of the workers for struggle and of the capacity of the red unions to organize and lead masses of workers against the capitalist offensive.

Here, too, the question of the application of the united front from below must be brought forward in the most concrete form on the basis of our past experiences and daily problems and struggles. It is here that the deepest study of the resolution on the lessons of the strike struggles must be required from every comrade in a responsible post and that it also be popularized among the membership of the revolutionary unions.

The preparation of strike struggles, the resolution emphasizes, means both political and organizational preparation. The development of the strike struggles are hindered by insufficient preparatory work. The first point in the resolution therefore states: "*The preparatory work* for the miners' strike was very weak, not carried out in due time and not sufficiently thorough."

The necessity to establish the widest proletarian democracy, both in the preparation of and during the strike struggles, cannot be overemphasized. We must draw all the implications from the following statement of the resolution." The application of the forms of proletarian democracy during the strike is one of the most essential preconditions for consolidation of the fighting front and the disciplining of the broad mass of the strikers. It also certainly was of great importance in this strike that a central strike committee and pretty generally the local strike committees of the various

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mines were elected. But shortcomings in the use of the forms of proletarian democracy during the strike led to the fact that the strike committee could not carry through to the end the task of consolidating the strikers."

Organizational methods in the revolutionary unions are still too much of an individual character. They smack too much of old trade union methods. A list here of some of the searching criticisms made of the work of our Party and the leadership of the revolutionary unions in the most important mass strike ever led by our Party, and two other important strike struggles, will help to make clear the dangerous errors we have made through our formal and sectarian, and at times, purely opportunist approach, to the workers and to strike struggles.

The *outstanding and central point of criticism* of our work in the miners' strike last summer is formulated as follows in the resolution:

"Clarity was lacking on the *basic* line which the Communists had to keep in mind as a rule of conduct." This is obviously a fundamental error from which other serious errors resulted. Lack of clarity on a basic line is one of the most serious weaknesses that a Communist Party can exhibit. The resolution goes on to state that we did not understand—

> ". . . how to clearly link up the task of the development of the Party, which it correctly emphasized as urgent, with the actual and no less urgent task of doing everything possible to *win the miners' strike*. It was not made clear that a separation and counterposing of these two tasks, the emphasis of the one *at the expense* of the other, conceals within itself the danger of a political one-sidedness or deviation. A lack of clarity remained as to what was to be stressed as the main object that the Communists were to pursue in the strike struggle; that if one wants to avoid the danger of one-sidedness, then neither the simple winning of the material results which are contained in the strike demand, nor the simple utilization of the strike for the strengthening of the Party organization, would be designated as the main object, but that, on the contrary, the *revolutionizing of the striking workers* should be the main object."

The resolution further states:

> "Material success is not always possible in a strike, and it is not an *absolute* prerequisite for the political success of the struggle; but it must never be forgotten that *without a most serious struggle for the material outcome, there can be no prospect of political success.*"

These criticisms when reflected in the quick correction of such

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fundamental errors and the application of these lessons in the preparation and conduct of strike struggles will make the decisive turn in our work, in our ability to mobilize masses against the capitalist offensive.

The most effective struggle by our comrades against social fascist betrayals in the revolutionary unions cannot be carried through without intensive work within the old trade unions. It is here that our comrades gain the most valuable experience in the struggle against the bureaucrats and their socialist and Musteite allies. The directives of the R.I.L.U. contained in "The Immediate Tasks of the Members of the R.I.L.U." in this respect must be carried out:

> "We must at all costs work within the revolutionary trade unions and carry on a determined struggle against the inclination towards the line of least resistance.
>
> "This means that all attempts to abandon or weaken the work within the reactionary trade unions, under whatever flag this be covered, must be met with unflinching resistance. Simultaneously with this we must decisively fight against the slightest attempt at crumbling up the revolutionary work in the name of this task. The work within the reformist organizations is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. *The most immediate aim is to win the members of the reformist unions for the class struggle and to organize the resistance and counter-offensive of the proletariat.* The work within the reformist unions means the struggle for the masses and a tenfold struggle against the strikebreaking trade union apparatus."

Our comrades in the revolutionary unions must *now carry through in the shortest possible time the process of concentration of the leading forces in the most decisive plants and factories of their respective industries.*

The tendency to look upon assignments to a lower unit in a big plant or factory as demotion or discrimination must be overcome. Surely it is clear, when we realize the huge tasks confronting our Party and the burning need for organization of effective struggle against imperialist war, that a comrade put in charge of work in a factory employing three, five, ten or fifteen thousand workers in a decisive industry has a task whose responsibility is not exceeded by that of a district organizer. The resolution itself makes this clear since it calls for the assignment of the most responsible comrades to precisely such positions, to guarantee the actual building of our Party and revolutionary unions from below.

Our Party is entering the election campaign under the most favorable conditions in its history. Its program, short, simple and direct, with the central demand for unemployment and social insurance at the expense of the bosses and government, meets the

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urgent needs of the American working class in this historical epoch. We have for the first time the opportunity, during the course of the election struggle and the other struggles of the workers which will inevitably arise as a result of the ever heavier burden of the crisis, the capitalist offensive and imperialist war preparations, of becoming a really mass Party in a comparatively short time—a Party *of* instead of a Party *for* the workers—providing we carry through the turn demanded by the resolutions of the 14th Plenum, root out formalism and sectarianism, and really base ourselves and our Party in the decisive sections of the American working class, change bureaucratic and lifeless inner "work" to Bolshevik methods and mass work.

The speedy carrying through of the resolutions of our 14th Plenum means preparing our Party for the major role in the mass struggle against American imperialism. Comrade Stalin once said that the Communist Party of the United States perhaps, in spite of its small size, was one of the parties of the Comintern which had a decisive role to play in the near future. To fulfill this prediction means a complete break with the former sectarian and formalistic methods of work so deeply rooted in our Party both as a result of its composition and its continued isolation from the working class.

It is likewise of decisive importance for the successful application of the 14th Plenum resolutions that there will be a *rapid raising of the theoretical level of the entire Party* and the wiping out by whatever means are necessary, of the lack of faith in the will of the masses for militant struggle in this period, and lack of confidence in the capacity of our Party to arouse, organize, inspire and lead the decisive sections of the American working class.

The resolution speaks sharply against the tendency of adopting good resolutions which remain on paper. The Plenum therefore also adopted a number of organizational guarantees for the carrying out of the line of the resolutions of the 14th Plenum.

The C. C. Plenum must become the decisive factor in the struggle against imperialist war. We must carry through the main task set for us by the Communist International, the task of winning the majority of the working class for the proletarian revolution. The resolutions of our 14th Plenum point the way. They must be put into effect.

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The Struggle for the Majority of the Working Class and Our Mass Work

By O. KUUSINEN

ON THE problem of the material and political results of the strike movement.

You know that the strike movement can attain material successes also in such a case when a strike would seem as though it had given no positive material results. Such cases are very frequent. During recent times, however, the contrary was very often the case; a strike seemed as though it led to material success but the gains are, after some time, taken back. Can we, however, say of a strike, which had ended without material sucess, that it was lost? No. If we take such examples as the struggle of the miners in the Ruhr, or the struggle of the metal workers in Berlin, it will be clear to everyone that we have achieved big political and organizational results for the revolutionary movement, despite the fact that they were not successful in achieving material success. But we can imagine a contrary case, that a strike ends in material success, but has not brought us any political advantage? I think that this can be the case. Imagine that the reformists succeeded during the strike in politically isolating the masses from us. This would have been a defeat, though the strike might end successfully, in the material respect. Such cases happen very seldom, but they are possible as exceptions.

It is not always so simple to decide the question as to whether a strike has ended in victory or defeat. This depends in the first place upon how the strike is carried on. A strike which is carried through well is always a political victory whether it brought with it material success or not. But a badly carried through strike may also be a political defeat. This is exactly why it is important not to consider the question of a strike regardless of how it was carried on. We must lay stress on the question as to whether a strike was carried through correctly, and its political results. Wherein is the political significance of the results of a strike for us? In the rise of the fighting mood of the workers, their fighting resolution, the revolutionization of the masses who take part in this struggle, and

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the strengthening of our revolutionary organizations as a result of the strike.

It is wrong to say that every strike is to be considered an achievement merely because it is resistance to the offensive of capital or an offensive against the employers. This would be an abstract estimate and not an estimate from the point of view of an active revolutionary policy. The strike is a struggle, and a struggle can only be appraised in accordance with its consequences. We must learn to appraise the significance and aims of strikes better than we have done hitherto. We have the richest material on strike movements during the last years. We have not yet sufficiently analyzed this experience. We must do this, so that we may fight more concretely than hitherto, against opportunist tendencies which amount to the avoidance of struggles as well as also against the "left" tendencies of "playing" with strikes.

For us it is no longer a question whether strikes are possible. The question that we have to put is *how* strikes are to be properly and successfully waged. The most important thing in this question is, in my opinion, the point which was noted by the Fifth Red International of Labor Unions Congress and which has become the slogan of all R. I. L. U. Congresses, and, namely: "To the factories and works and to the masses!" It is from this point of view that we must appraise all the strike struggles as well as all the other struggles during recent times, from the point of view of our contact with the wide masses. The secret of partial victories and small victories which the Polish strike movement has won, I see in the first place in this, that the Polish comrades have succeeded, better than our comrades in some other countries, in establishing real close and live connections with the masses.

You remember how Lenin, I think in his book *Left Wing Communism—an Infantile Disorder*, has said that it is necessary to a certain extent to fuse with the masses, but only to a certain extent. It is perhaps just because the Polish Communist party is an illegal Party that the Polish comrades have succeeded in achieving this in some of the factories and works.

THE WORKING OUT OF DEMANDS

Comrade Dahlem has set forth in detail the demands of the German comrades in the enterprise of Tietz. This in my opinion was a very good program of action but it was too general. Comrade Dahlem has himself said that it should have been concretized for the workers in the various departments of the enterprise. That was an exact German piece of work. But it was, all the same, not

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sufficiently concrete. From Great Britain we had, generally speaking, only bad examples. Perhaps you will allow me to mention one good example. In this domain there happens to be a good example. We have heard about it from Comrade Hardy. His method of putting forward a program of action for the seamen is absolutely the same as the method of the Warsaw comrades in their work among the tramwaymen. This method has justified itself also in Great Britain. It is not merely a narrow Polish invention, but it is applicable also for Great Britain. In that case it should also be applicable both for France and other countries.

While I lay so much stress upon the necessity of linking up the program of action with the small demands of the workers, I do not at all want to say that only such demands must be put forward. These demands must serve as the starting point in the struggle, but they must be broadened. I will give here as an example the strike of the miners in South Wales in the beginning of 1931. The question arose at the end of that strike, whether the main strike demands should be maintained after the reformists had already betrayed the strike or whether the struggle should be concentrated around the local grievances and the local needs of the workers. This is an example of how a good rule may be driven to the point of absurdity. When the main strike demands have been put forward and the workers have accepted them and have entered upon a strike and carried on the struggle during three weeks, at such a time these demands should not be narrowed down and there should be no retreat from them and no attempt should be made to seek out absolutely new partial demands. This would have been nothing more than a concession to the reformists.

Another lesson which can be learned—from the struggle of the Warsaw tramway workers—about the formation of independent strike committees of the workers. This also is a very simple thing but this also is not carried out. And yet this is one of the fundamental demands of the Fifth R.I.L.U. Congress theses. The example of Warsaw, therefore, where in practice it has been shown how this demand should be realized, is exceedingly important.

Permit me to draw another lesson from the Warsaw tramway workers' strike, the lesson relating to the question of initiative in the declaration of a strike. We have not, of course, always the possibility of taking the initiative into our own hands. But the question is, do we try to take the initiative without waiting, as, unfortunately, is usually the case in France, for the moment when the reformists begin a struggle, and trying in advance to guess their conduct. One considers that the reformists will begin the strike, another says "No they will not begin," and so the thing drags on during the whole

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period of preparation. One cannot say that our comrades were not active in the metal workers' strike in Berlin, but they had not the possibility of developing the struggle until the reformists entered into it.

That they were active, is shown by the fact that despite the decisive influence which the reformists had on determining the date for the beginning of the struggle, our comrades were yet able in the process of the struggle and during the course of a few days to capture into their hands the leadership of the struggle. But we had not the possibility of exercising a decisive influence on the consummation of the struggle. Such things happen. The German comrades cannot be blamed for this. Another question is whether they should not have carried through a lot of work within the reformist unions before the strikes. However, on the eve and during the strike they displayed, in my opinion, initiative. They carried through proper preparation for the strike and have shown initiative in good time in the development of that strike. This is neither the same as a routine every-day call to the workers to strike nor in the nature of hysterical cries of strike.

The employers, as may be seen from many examples, are striving to lull the vigilance of the workers, and the reformists are putting into play all sorts of methods so as to make us believe that the strike will be postponed. But frequently there are objective signs by which it is possible to estimate in good time the position and to learn when a strike will begin, even in those cases when we are still too weak to begin a strike with our own forces.

Perhaps the most vivid example in this respect is the miners' strike in South Wales. Comrade Horner happened to be with us as our guest in October-November, 1930. The strike took place in the beginning of January, 1931. And so that was three months before the beginning of the strike. Here in Moscow, Comrade Horner, together with us, clearly saw, not only the near approach of the strike, but even foresaw the time of its commencement. However, when he went home, the nearer he got to South Wales the less clear for him became the position. The comrades on the spot, including among them also Comrade Horner, were caught napping by the strike.

When such a big strike as the textile strike in the North of France approached, our comrades remained peacefully in Paris and decided to discuss this important question roughly about one week after the strike had already begun. I am giving here an extreme example. But this happens, on a smaller scale, in very many countries. Of course, frequently when we speak of a strike situation, the mistake in our tactics consists in a narrower sense of the

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word. In this respect the Warsaw tramway strike is instructive. The question of the necessity of immediately declaring a strike was not put all at once and without any preparation in the enterprise.

Although the workers were highly indignant with the rationalization measures, but the question was still new and had not yet been discussed. One general meeting was held and then another. The second meeting was dissolved—it took place in the works; then a third meeting was held outside the works. Two, three and four meetings were necessary before a decision about the declaration of a strike could be carried. At the first meeting an agitation for the strike was begun. Our Warsaw comrades did not declare the strike themselves, but through patient explanation they achieved the collective decision of the workers.

It is no easy matter to bring workers in favor of a strike within a short period. At such moments the mass of workers in the factories hesitate. Why does it hesitate? Not because, in the majority of cases, it does not want to fight and not because it considers the strike demands wrong. When the mass feels that it has leadership, in the first place resolute leadership, in the second place wise leadership, and in the third place such a leadership which will devote all efforts so as to draw into the struggle the wide masses and the whole mass entirely, then the workers cease hesitating.

Unfortunately, the majority of strikes are still spontaneous strikes. And those cases, when strikes occur on our initiative our comrades must be capable of carrying the strike through as a battle. Unfortunately, there are still in a number of countries survivals of the old traditions in the approach to strikes. A militant group is not organized for the service of the strike and not all efforts are strained for its extension.

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE REFORMISTS

The Fifth R.I.L.U. Congress pointed out that the mass struggles of the present time serve as the touch-stone to show whether our revolutionary trade union organizations really possess fighting capacities and are really efficient live organs for the defence of the interests of the workers against the offensive of capital and to what extent they are capable of coping with their tasks in the preparation of the masses for their struggle and for their urgent class interests. This to a considerable, and even to a decisive degree, depends upon *how* the struggle is carried on.

On the struggle against the reformists. A tendency is to be observed among some of our comrades to deny the fact that the

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reformists can take part in a strike. Some comrades looked upon it as something scandalous that the reformists could in their country take part in a strike and that it was impossible to prevent it, as though this proved that the reformists were after all not so bad as we declared. Such a view, if it existed, was a purely reformist one. It is also said that a struggle was carried on against the will of the reformists even in such cases when the reformists stood at the head of a strike. But do the reformists become less dangerous because they take part in a strike? In my opinion, they do not. The reformists take part in a struggle in order that they may disrupt it. In Germany, the reformists right up to the last occasion, carried through in the majority of cases the tactics of open blacklegging. But even in Germany there were cases, not only in the struggle of the Berlin metal workers, but also in other cases, when the reformists took part in strikes under the pressure, of course, of the wide working masses.

When the reformists take part in a strike, a very difficult and often complicated problem arises before us. We see that in many countries, in the first place in the U.S.A. and France as well as in Great Britain, our comrades have not been capable of exposing the real role of the reformists in strikes. What was their role? It is not merely the role of the strike-breaker and the betrayer of a strike. They pretend to take part in the struggle, and at the same time, devote all their efforts so as to betray the strike. To explain this to the workers during the struggle is not so easy as some of the delegates from France, for instance, declare. Thus, at the time of the textile workers' strike it was said that the reformists were supposed to fight right up to the moment until a compromise was concluded with Laval. Some declared that the reformists are fighting for compromise and not for the satisfaction of all the demands of the workers. All this is absolutely untrue, because the textile workers' strike in France is just the classical example of how the reformists have utilized the trick of a compromise with a portion of the employers and with Laval so as to undermine the strike as a whole. And our comrades, not all of them but a part of them, believed what was written in the newspapers that the reformists really stood for a compromise, that they were fighting for the partial satisfaction of the demands of the workers. But the object of the reformists is not a compromise but the demobilization of the strikers and the break-up of the strike. The example of the strike of the French textile workers shows how the reformists, thanks to their tactics of the united front, succeeded in some places, not everywhere, in partly maintaining their influence on the masses in those

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places where our comrades only say that the reformists are traitors but do not concretize this statement.

At the end of every strike, a campaign of exposure of the reformist leaders should be carried out. But to carry through this exposure is not always easy, as already other speakers have here pointed out. What a number of opportunist mistakes have been made in this connection by Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade union movement!

I must say that we feel a certain amount of anxiety when we see how in various countries (and this is to be met with even in the best families, even in Germany) opportunist mistakes are made in carrying through their tactics of the united front after all that has been written and said on this subject. What, for instance, must be done in such a case which we have lately observed in Breslau? Perhaps a mistake was only committed in a purely trade union domain? But then we are not merely trade union functionaries.

Or, for example, in the Ruhr area where a resolution of protest was passed for the purpose of sending it to the Government instead of really mobilizing the masses so as to carry out fighting demonstrations. An opinion is current among a portion of the comrades or a half-hidden tendency, that we must not be too strict in this respect in the trade union movement. In the trade union movement we may permit ourselves a certain amount of liberal freedom of action.

But, surely, opportunism in the revolutionary trade union movement is not better than opportunism in the political movement. In France there should be no talk of the possibility of entering the C.G.T. *en bloc*. In France we must carefully watch that our committees of unity should not be transformed into committees of "unity dizziness." In Czecho-Slovakia, it should not be suggested to realize the united front with the right wing renegades who were expelled from the Party. In the Austrian province of Schtiri an agreement should not have been concluded with the Republican Defence Union (Schutzbund). In the Ruhr area a proposal should not have been made to the reformists on the third day of the strike to realize the united front after the reformists have already committed open strike-breaking. In America an open reformist, about whom it was known in advance that he would betray the struggle, should not have been admitted to the leadership, etc.

In passing over to the question of mass work I want to say that it seems to me that what has been put forward at this session of the Central Council by many speakers, including also Comrade Lozovsky, namely, the problem of the work in the factories, is one of first-rate importance. There was a time when the necessity of concen-

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trating the work in the factories had still been disputed. The position afterwards became still worse. The importance of this task was recognized, but in reality, it was fulfilled to a very slight degree. This cannot go on any longer.

THE POLITICAL CONTENT OF FACTORY WORK

In what direction should our previous directives in this domain be concretized? I would like to give a few indications on this subject. I do not speak of the technical difficulties of this work. In the majority of cases, when the question was put forward in such a way that it was supposed to be impossible to carry on work in the factories in Europe in the 20th Century, it turned out that in Europe and in this century it is perfectly possible to carry on work in the factories, *provided it is carried on properly*. We have positive examples in a number of countries. I am not speaking of the purely organizational side of this question, because it seems to me, that much has already been said on this aspect of the problem. But less was said about the *political* content of this work.

What is the political content of the work in the factories? We usually describe the thing as though it was petty "hum-drum" work, frequently not understanding that it must have political content. Thus, for instance, the organization of a factory shop meeting, in my opinion, an extremely important thing, is often considered as an exclusively organizational task. A factory shop meeting is organized, or usually it is not organized, but notices are sent out and there the matter is allowed to rest. In Great Britain particularly, a meeting is usually arranged in this manner. The workers, of course, do not attend. They do not also attend in Germany where meetings are really organized. Comrade Heckert, in the example which he gave, explains this by the workers' fear of spies. But then when big general meetings are held, the matter becomes much more difficult for the spies, and the workers fear them less.

How can we secure the organization of large meetings? The main thing in this is, *what* questions should be put on the agenda of the meeting? This is a political question, but it concerns us. The British comrades who desire to carry out precisely the directives of the Comintern and the R.I.L.U., invite, let us say, the workers of some metal factory to a general meeting and inform them, on handbills, that a report will be given at the meeting of the condition of the metal workers in the particular branch of industry. The workers do not come to the meeting, believing that the subject is not interesting and that they know the conditions better than the Communist speakers.

But the workers, including also the British workers, are interested in other things beside sport. There are questions in dispute in every

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factory in England, which are capable of developing movements and mass protest. Why then do we not put forward these questions for the discussion with the workers? I will reveal this secret to you: Our comrades know nothing in regard to exactly those questions which are of urgent importance in the factories. We have such examples in Great Britain where our comrades with great heroism stood in front of a big depot during the course of nine months for several hours every evening and sold the central organ of the Communist Party, on the average of 100 copies per day.

But during the course of these nine months they enrolled out of 200 workers in the factory only one worker into the Party, who after two months again left the Party. Why? Because the factory remained for our comrades a closed world. The paper did not know and the seller of the papers did not know what was going on in the factory and the worker was not interested as to what was written in the paper. This was the only paper which was sold at the factory gate and this was the reason why it circulated to the extent of 100 copies.

Perhaps this is a trifle. But it seems to me that such trifles are of political significance. There are questions around which it is possible to mobilize the masses in the factories. One cannot imagine that the masses are only interested in lectures. The masses want to fight. They do not always want to strike. I know of only one example in Poland when the workers in one factory went out on strike four times in the course of a single year. This happens seldom. But it is possible to develop a mass movement in the factory in other forms if the Communists understand how to link it up with the fundamental questions.

The workers in capitalist countries must be assisted in the first place in questions of the struggle. We will only be able to win the confidence of the workers when they come to understand that we not only desire to assist them but that we are able also to lead them in the struggle. We keep on repeating that we must above all win the confidence of the masses. But this confidence is won not merely by way of propaganda and agitation. This has been strongly emphasized by Lenin. The masses are revolutionized by their own experience. Their experience of the struggle under the leadership of the Communists plays also a big part. When they come to know from experience that the Communists are helping them in the struggles, then they will fight under Communist leadership.

The factory shop work which I have here recommended may be characterized in one word, *as a correct preparation of strike strug-*

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gles. as a preparation with the aid of mass work. This does not mean that a strike can never break out without such a mass movement in the factories. But in such places where we cannot yet develop a strike, we must, without fail, develop these other forms of mass movement.

WORK IN REFORMIST UNIONS

In regard to the work in the reformist trade unions, I should like to point out that here also the old position on the question must be liquidated. The question is not whether we must work within the reformist trade unions. This is how Merker put the question, and considered that it is first of all necessary to form very revolutionary trade unions and only afterwards enter upon the work in the reformist trade unions. The right wing opportunists who considered that it is necessary to be very careful and that it is in general unnecessary to unite our forces have declared themselves for work only within the reformist trade unions.

Some survivals of these old false positions are to be observed here and there but they are of great significance. The old question is also no longer raised as to whether we should win within the reformist trade unions the apparatus or the masses. This should by now be clear to our comrades, at least in theory, if not always also in practice. I consider it wrong when it is said that the work within the reformist trade unions has suffered from the fact that too much attention is devoted to the work among the unorganized. I think that this is not so.

How should we carry on work within the reformist trade unions? And here also the basic method of the work is the mass campaign and not the petty day-to-day work. You must not understand me in such a way, as though I am opposed to petty work, but as we previously stressed one-sidedly, the necessity of this work. I would like now to stress the significance of *mass* work. Why? In the reformist trade unions we also have the masses, not quite those which we have in the factories, but also here we have to know with what questions to appear before the workers. For such mass campaigns not all questions are of use, and not every routine program elaborated at headquarters. Here, for instance, the reformist trade union leadership in Germany, at the last Congress of the A.D.G.B. (the All-German Federation of Trade Unions) conducted a campaign for the 40-hour week without maintaining wages. This question interests all the members of the reformist trade unions, but other questions must be put forward for a campaign to be carried on within the trade unions. It is exceedingly important to note

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that we cannot make any and every question a basis for a campaign, but must carefully decide as to what we are to start from.

We should assist in the calling of membership meetings. In such places where the reformists leadership refuses to call them we should call them ourselves. We must, without fail, have in view that we should not remain within the bounds of trade union legality and trade union discipline, but should, on the contrary, disrupt this discipline. Our comrades, not infrequently, put forward in the reformist trade unions without any preparation, the question of the removal of the leadership. Frequently when carrying through some campaign, we succeed in drawing to our side the members of the reformist unions who are ready to follow us in concrete questions, but have not yet passed over to our side all along the line.

We must perhaps have two, three, and four such campaigns before we may defeat the reformist leadership. But these questions should be raised and we must not forget, as, unfortunately, frequently happens that it is absolutely wrong to make any concessions in the question which I would call eternal opposition in the trade unions. Such was not at all the line of the Fifth R.I.L.U. Congress.

It is wrong also to say that the workers in the reformist unions are nothing but big and small Zorgibels. It is wrong also to recognize in words the necessity for the formation of an opposition in the reformist trade unions, without uniting organizationally our cadres, and our militants in these trade unions.

You remember the line which was laid down by the Fifth Congress for Poland and Germany? Has it been really carried out? Have the special tasks which were indicated for Poland and Germany been fulfilled? I consider that in both countries we have only just entered upon their fulfilment. Something has already been done, but the task of the independent building up of revolutionary trade unions, the completion of the building up of the R.T.U.O. has not yet been carried to the end. We must take further steps in this direction in Poland and Germany, in closest connection with the development and broadening of a wide mass movement.

The formation of new unions in Germany and Poland will, without doubt, be both necessary and useful, but it has to be linked up with the development of a mass movement. We must have in view both in Germany and in Poland that which has been said by the Fifth Congress, that the course of the formation of an independent revolutionary trade union movement is a task to which must be subjected the whole trade union work. But should we

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put the question in this way that the line for the independent trade union movement should have been taken only in Germany and Poland and should not have been taken in other countries where the trade union movement is not split. Of course not. This would have been real opportunism, against which we must fight resolutely. The experience of the renegades has shown where this path leads to.

We have taken up the line in all countries for the development of an independent revolutionary trade union movement, in the first place completely independent politically, and in the second independent organizationally to the degree in which we succeed in winning the masses and to the extent to which it is expedient from the point of view of the further development of our mass movement. Does that mean that we should, without much further ado, open our own little shops? Not at all. It is necessary to have both a wide opposition and an independent mass organization, and it is necesary above all to form an R.T.U.O.

It would be wrong to under-estimate the significance of the further development of Red trade unions. In France, as compared with Germany, the position is alarming because in France we are going back, while in Germany our forces are growing although slowly. We must, without fail, not only develop a revolutionary trade union opposition but also Red trade unions. Everywhere, not only in France, Czecho-Slovakia or the U.S.A., with the intensification of the class battles, Red trade unions will inevitably be formed, not on a national scale, but on a scale of individual districts. But, however, not altogether as in the U.S.A., because the slogan of all the R.I.L.U. Congresses was just the following: "Forward with the masses at the head of the masses!" and this slogan is more necessary than ever.

Everyone of us feels that the work in the reformist trade unions is now of the greatest significance. The position is not as some of those so-called left comrades think, who consider that economic struggles are only of importance in periods of stabilization, but at the present time, when the crisis has become so sharp, when we are on the threshold of a revolutionary crisis, such strike struggles can no longer have any significance. This is absolutely wrong. This is not a Leninist and not a revolutionary approach. The Fifth R.I.L.U. Congress declared itself against these views with all determination.

We stand before a most responsible situation not only in capitalist countries but also in the East. The widest movement is developing in all the colonial countries. The slogan of the general strike has long since been put forward in India. The position is sharpening

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in the whole capitalist world. And at the same time we may observe a rapid rise in our great common fatherland. The prerequisites for revolutionary crisis are growing in rapid tempos in the entire capitalist world. The tempos, however, of the preparations for the decisive battles lag behind as yet.

This must be a matter for our cares. Comrade Lozovsky was perhaps too one-sided when he pointed out in his self-criticism that we lag behind politically all along the line. We have good, even splendid achievements which we do not study sufficiently, but what we have to be anxious about is that we have not developed sufficient tempos in the domain of the revolutionary preparation of organizations, as leading organs of the mass revolutionary struggle. We must accomplish this work better and we must learn not only to struggle better, but to win. And victory will be ours!

Read—

The Resolution
of the Communist International on

"LESSONS OF STRIKE STRUGGLES IN U. S. A."

Printed in full in the 14th Plenum Pamphlet

"TOWARD REVOLUTIONARY MASS WORK"

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Some Elementary Phases of the Work in the Reformist Trade Unions

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

THIS article makes no pretense at being a thesis. It does not aim at covering every phase of the work in the old trade unions. Rather its purpose is to clarify a number of points upon which there is confusion, uncertainty, or neglect, and to make concrete application of the new methods of work to our tasks in the reformist unions.

THE QUESTION OF PARTIAL DEMANDS

The Communist International has pointed out to us upon many occasions, and this is said afresh in the resolution of our 14th Plenum, that all our trade union work, as well as our Party's work in general, must have its starting point in the general struggles of the workers for their partial demands. And by this the Communist International does not mean simply the work of the revolutionary T.U.U.L. unions. All its argumentation and analysis applies with equal force to the work within the old trade unions. But of this fact we are not very conscious. Especially in our activities in the A. F. of L. and other conservative trade unions is it clear that we have not yet made the real turn to mass work. There above all our work bears the stamp of general agitation rather than that of concrete struggle.

This fact stands out definitely if we glance at the work upon the railroads, a vitally important sector of the old union activities. Here we find our program to be based still primarily upon the agitation of a few general slogans against the wage cuts, for unemployment insurance and the six hour day, etc. There is as yet hardly a trace of local programs of demands for the various shops, roundhouses, yards, etc. There is no Negro program, although this is the worst Jim-Crow industry in the country. The general result of this failure to concretize the struggle into fights over the daily grievances of the workers is, of course, that we have not succeeded in getting mass organization or leadership on the railroads. In the building trades and mining industry matters are not much better. And in the needle trades, we recently saw the left wing

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minority of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, instead of proposing practical plans, commensurate with its weak forces and the mood of the workers, for struggles over less fundamental issues, announced the grandiloquent plan of building the new union and launching a general strike to abolish piece-work. Such a program in the given circumstances, could not but result in isolating us from the main body of the workers. It was only one more case of a sectarian substitution of glittering phrases for real struggle.

Such general agitation in the old unions must give way to definite struggle in support of the immediate economic demands if we are to make real progress. And the situation is ripe for such struggles over innumerable issues. It is not simply a case of mobilizing the organized workers to resist the general wage cuts that the bosses are forcing upon them. The employers are worsening conditions in every direction, systematically undermining the conditions provided for in the existing agreements. And one of the bitterest grievances of the rank and file is that their officials do not take up the fight to repel these attacks.

The question of the enforcement of the union agreements becomes a vital one for us. In the past our comrades have not made much of this matter, concluding that because the bureaucrats have signed these agreements we would compromise ourselves by demanding their enforcement. But this is a sectarian error. For the most part these agreements were signed during the "prosperity" period and hence provide for wages and working standards which the bosses, with the help of the labor fakers, are now breaking down. Hence, it becomes a major issue for us and one that the workers will easily understand and support, to demand the fulfillment of the agreements.

SHOP WORK AND THE REFORMIST UNIONS

But, of course, we cannot limit ourselves simply to the terms of the agreements. To do that would be to fall victims to the worst sort of trade union legalism. We must, on the contrary, wherever we have the power, establish the best possible conditions, agreements or no agreements. Moreover, we must link up the struggles of the various organized crafts and also seek to extend the union conditions to cover the unorganized workers. This whole matter of resisting the violation of the union agreements opens up one of the most fruitful ways for the development of the mass struggle of the organized workers and to strengthen our forces generally in the conservative labor unions.

Our work among the organized membership of the A. F. of L. must, like the work of the T.U.U.L. unions, be based upon the

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shops and other work-places. It is not enough that we form opposition groups in the local unions; these must have as their foundation corresponding groupings in the shops. Thus the issues raised by us in the local unions must be enforced directly in the shops, and vice versa. It is idle to expect the bureaucrats to put them into effect in the shops even if they should be adopted in the local unions.

In the main our organization form in the shops must be based upon the group of workers supporting our general line. This group should hold meetings, taking up the various problems confronting the workers in the shop. It should aim at the development of united front shop machinery along the same lines as the revolutionary unions, that is, grievance committees and shop committees representative of the whole body of workers, organized and unorganized. In some instances there are skeleton trade union shop grievance committees at hand, and we should aim at capturing and broadening these into real organs of struggle. In other cases it will be necessary to build our shop organizations from the ground up; thus, for example, the proposed building trades job committees of all trades to stop "bootlegging" beneath the union scales and generally to enforce better conditions on the works.

Up till now our work in the reformist unions has been confined almost entirely within the locals. This has been largely divorced from the real shop life of the workers. A typical example of weakness in this respect existed in the anthracite. There, in spite of the fact that many locals had affiliated themselves to the opposition movement, the comrades made no effort whatever to take charge of the mine committees existing. They confined themselves to general agitation, neglecting the daily job grievances of the workers. When this shortcoming was pointed out to them they declared that any attempt to elect new grievance committees would meet the most violent resistance of the bureaucrats, the companies and the local government. All of which simply goes to show that the bosses and their labor leader tools had a far better appreciation of the importance of the mine committees and the control of the daily grievances of the workers than had opposition leaders.

The failure to base our A. F. of L. activities upon the shop is always illustrated during strikes. Our strike work takes on too much of a general agitational character, instead of being based directly upon the individual shops. A typical example of this was seen in the recent New York dress strike. Instead of the most careful and systematic organization and struggle shop by shop in the ranks of the workers, the tendency was towards general meetings, general demonstrations, general organization campaigns, etc., with

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the natural result that we failed very much in establishing mass leadership.

These tendencies must be combatted. We must root our A. F. of L. work directly in the shops. Then it will have life and vitality. Then we will be able to build up some real and solid opposition to the misleaders in control of these organizations.

RELATIONS OF REVOLUTIONARY UNIONS AND MINORITIES

In our movement there is much confusion regarding the general question of the relationship between the revolutionary unions of the T.U.U.L. and the opposition movements in the reformist unions. This manifests itself in a variety of ways, all of which are harmful. It is very necessary that this whole matter be cleared up, so that the revolutionary unions and minorities may coordinate their work, supplementing each other in the general task of revolutionizing the workers.

One of the worst forms of this confusion is a tendency for the revolutionary unions to disassociate themselves altogether from the minority work, feeling little or no responsibility for it. Many examples of this are at hand. For example, when the recent convention of the United Mine Workers of America was called, by an official call sent to every local, by press notices, etc., the N.M.U. was so uninformed about it that it denounced the convention, which it discovered almost at the last moment, as a "secret convention." And the Metal Workers Industrial League, until recently, was quite unconscious of the necessity of building an opposition group in the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers. Even in the needle trades, where the minorities and the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union are beginning to work together, there is to be seen not only neglect of the situation in some organized trades but direct demands to be freed from the responsibility of developing activities there.

All this is wrong. The resolution on the T.U.U.L., adopted at the 8th session of the Red International of Labor Unions, says: "the leadership of the oppositions in the parallel reformist unions must be in the hands of the corresponding revolutionary unions." This means that the revolutionary unions must not only give direction to such work but also assume responsibility for it. This, however, does not require direct affiliation between minorities and unions. The minorities should give themselves such names as are most appropriate under the circumstances. They should send regular or fraternal delegations to the revolutionary union conventions, as their degree of strength permits. The same principle applies

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to reformist locals under revolutionary leadership. Great flexibility must be shown in the matter of affiliations, delegations, names of opposition movements, etc., in order not to expose the workers needlessly to expulsion by the bureaucrats.

A further expression of the confusion upon this question of the relations between unions and minorities is the tendency for the revolutionary unions to assume the functions of the minorities during strikes of A. F. of L. unions. That is, they often undertake to give the most direct leadership to the striking workers instead of developing this initiative from an opposition movement within the striking union itself. A typical example of this took place in the Hocking Valley miners' strike where the N.M.U. organizers, instead of building an opposition base inside the striking U.M.W.A., tried directly to organize the workers into the N.M.U. and to lead the strike under the latter's name in spite of the fact that it had no members. In such situations the proper approach is through the organized opposition. This does not mean, however, that the revolutionary union has no open role to play. On the contrary, it must support the strike with all its forces and build up its united front contacts with the striking workers.

The grossest confusion of the roles of revolutionary unions and minorities exhibits itself in tendencies towards premature splits. In such cases, instead of developing as a minority within the old unions, the comrades become imbued with sectarian haste and, by a split, transform into an isolated and sterile independent union what could easily have been a powerful opposition movement. A serious example of this wrong tendency was shown in the split of the San Francisco painters. Instead of utilizing the great discontent of the workers to develop a powerful movement against the bosses and the local labor fakers this strong revolt was run into the ground by directing it into the formation of a separate union, and a national one at that.

THE QUESTION OF TRADE UNION UNITY

The question of trade union unity is always a burning one, and especially in this period of sharpening struggle. We must be the champions and fighters for such unity. Never should we lose the initiative in this vital matter. We must prove in deed, as well as in word, that we really stand for trade union unity. Only by fitting our daily practice to the most concrete fight for unity can we expose the fake unity proposals of the demagogues and convince the workers that we alone work for solidarity. Unfortunately, however, we have usually not done this.

Our main approach to the problem of unity is the united front.

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The united front must be built from the bottom and established in the struggle. In order to build the united front we must actually fight for it. Up till now our united front work has been essentially formal and sectarian in character. It has consisted chiefly of our issuing united front manifestoes to the workers, calling upon them to join with us in struggle, and then, when they did not quickly respond, going ahead with the building of narrow united front organs of practically our own close connections.

Such methods are completely wrong, as the 14th Plenum resolution so sharply points out. We must actually penetrate the masses with our program and, in struggle against the bureaucrats, build the united front. We must go to the workers, not wait for them to come to us. During the recent New York dress strike some small advances have been made in this direction by the N.T.W.I.U. developing joint picket lines, joint demonstrations, etc., with the I.L.G.W.U. membership, and this richly repaid the N.T.W.I.U. in greater prestige and membership. But the real turn has not yet been made. In strikes we must not only propose one strike and one strike committee, but resolutely fight in the ranks of the striking masses to bring them to pass. In the particular cases of the Paterson and dress strikes it was clearly an error to set "our" strike date upon a different day than that of the bureaucrats as it tended to feed the idea that we did not want unity; in both cases we should have postponed our strike dates. Likewise, in these two strikes, as well as in the Lawrence strike, we did not actually penetrate the old unions with our demand for one strike committee. We should not only have raised this question in their meetings, through our minorities and rank and file delegations, but we should even have sent our delegates to the strike committees with our demands. Then it would have been clearer to the masses that ours was the unity program and that the bureaucrats were the splitters. Such boldness with the united front tactic will not weaken the revolutionary unions, as some fear, but enormously strengthen them.

The question of trade union unity raises the issue of amalgamation. What shall be our attitude upon this matter? In all our activities among the reformist unions, T.U.U.L. unions and unorganized we must work upon the principle of "one industry, one union," and we must be the leaders of every genuine movement in that direction. This means that we must base our unity movements at the bottom, in the shops, in the local unions, in the furtherance of the daily struggle. Our fight for trade union unity, based upon the united front, must be bound up with the struggle for organization on a shop basis, for real trade union democracy, for revolu-

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tionary leadership and program. We cannot return to the unity program of 1922, which consisted of simply a general agitation for the amalgamation of the unions at the top. The Musteites and Lovestoneites so put the question at the present time. Moreover, they use the slogan of amalgamation as a substitute for all struggle, as a means for leadership to strengthen themselves at the expense of the rank and file. For us the very essence of the fight for trade union unity must be the strengthening of the workers at the base, in the shops and local unions, and the defeat of the reactionary leadership. Unity slogans must not substitute for struggle; unity must grow out of the struggle.

Bound up with the question of trade union unity is also that of the organization of the unorganized. For the organization of the great masses of unorganized we must look to the revolutionary unions. "Organize the unorganized" is basically the slogan of the T.U.U.L. It is idle to expect that the reactionary A. F. of L. will undertake this revolutionary task. Before the corrupt leaders and the employers would permit the A. F. of L. organization to be used for this purpose they would wreck it by splits, so that in any event the task would revert to revolutionary organizations. The Lovestone thesis of millions of workers streaming into the A. F. of L. in all industries, a theory fathered by John Pepper, is part of the renegades' program for fighting the T.U.U.L. It is a weapon against the actual organization of the unorganized.

THE EXPOSURE OF THE BUREAUCRATS

It would be a mistake on our part, however, to take a negative position in the old unions on the question of organizing the unorganized. Wherever the left wing is in control, or wherever it would strengthen the forces of the left wing, we should not hesitate to organize the unorganized. But in any event we can only bring members into the corrupt A. F. of L. on the basis that they have a fighting chance, under left wing leadership, to defend their interests. This means that whatever organization work we do must be accompanied by the most complete exposure of the bureaucracy and the organization of the new members definitely into the opposition. Otherwise we would be leading the workers, Muste fashion, into the sell-out trap of the A. F. of L. fakers. Where these fakers demagogically begin "organization campaigns," such as the Green-Muste Southern textile affair, we must expose them and fight for the conditions indispensible for real organization and struggle; that is left wing leadership.

A basic task of ours in the trade unions is thoroughgoing exposure of the reactionary leadership. Unfortunately, however, we are

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carrying this out very inexpertly and casually. Too often our "exposure" of these fakers consists only of denunciation. And much of this denunciation, poorly documented, boomerangs against us when we do not actually prove it to the workers. This hit or miss method must be done away with at all costs. We must begin the most systematic exposure of the A. F. of L. leadership and especially their Musteite allies. We must follow them up with the most intimate, detailed and persistent exposure of their treacheries. Their relatively easy getaway after committing these crimes is due primarily to our failure to prove the goods on them and to thoroughly convict them in the eyes of the rank and file. This exposure, of course, must be linked at all points with our development of the daily economic struggle and the fight to clear out these fakers.

At this time the A. F. of L. leaders are doubly vulnerable to such exposure. The rank and file, radicalized by the crisis, are highly critical of them. The A. F. of L. leaders are in a very difficult position. Their "theory" is bankrupt; their high wages, "new capitalism" rubbish has crashed. Their practice exposes them more and more as bosses' agents; their Hoover-Green no-wage-cut agreement results in open wage slashes, and their handout unemployment relief campaign develops mass starvation. Their unspeakable graft and personal corruption have become a stench in the nostrils of the membership. Never was their prestige so low among the masses as now, and never was so good the opportunity to organize against them.

We must greatly sharpen the fight against them. We must thoroughly expose the fallacies and bankruptcy of their capitalist economic and political theories. We must drive the harpoon into them upon the question of unemployment insurance. We must call them to account in every local union for their Hoover-Green agreement and make them give an account of it. With the rising tide of sympathy for the Soviet Union among the masses of workers, we must nail down the fakers upon this issue and expose them as war-making tools of the employers. Likewise, we must greatly sharpen and systematize our fight against the bureaucrats upon their Jim-Crow Negro program and the rest of their reactionary policies.

Let me give one illustration of how we must make this fight: about a year ago the leaders of the Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers drove through an outrageous wage cut of about 40 per cent on the ground that it would be returned in a year, and that it would result in more work for the workers involved and also the complete unionization of the industries. Well, just as we said at the time, none of these things has happened. Now we must call these fakers

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to book. We must bring clearly to the workers' minds exactly what the misleaders promised and how we warned them against these lying statements. It is only by such follow-up work that we can really convict these fakers and organize the workers to remove them. The danger in this typical case is that, as in so many others, we will not follow the reactionaries like a Nemesis but will let the whole matter slip and take refuge in general and unconvincing denunciation.

THE POSITION OF THE REFORMIST UNIONS

In order to avoid confusion in our work it is necesary that we pay much closer attention to what is taking place in the conservative unions and sharpen up our general analysis of them. These organizations, under pressure of the economic crisis, are running into real difficulties. We must understand the course and implications of these. Here, in this already long article, it is not possible to fully analyze the situation, but merely to indicate its general outlines.

Manifestly the employers' offensive is hitting the A. F. of L. membership hard through unemployment and wage cuts. This in itself would be bound to produce profound effects upon the craft unions. But these effects are intensified by the fact that the leadership has utterly failed to defend the workers' interests, and, on the contrary, has shamelessly betrayed them by openly collaborating the whole starvation program of the employers. The result is a situation already difficult in these organizations and threatening to become critical.

The growing difficulties of the reformist unions manifest themselves in many ways. Among the more important of these are: (a) an unparalleled radicalization of the rank and file; (b) a manifest bankruptcy of the theory and practice of the leadership in the economic crisis; (c) a huge decrease in union membership in the past 18 months, amounting in some cases to as high as 40%; (d) a serious financial crisis; (e) increasing signs of alarm and confusion among the top leadership, etc.

Although the situation is serious, we must be on our guard against "leftist" notions that at long last the A. F. of L. is falling to pieces and that all we have to do is to wait around and pick up the pieces as they fall. We may be certain of two things: first, that the employers will not so easily allow their precious strike-breaking A. F. of L. leadership to collapse in the face of their added necessity to fight the T.U.U.L. unions and revolutionary minorities but will give their labor leader agents still more recognition and assistance; and second, that the A. F. of L. leaders, in order to be able

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to stay at the head of masses and betray them, will become more radical in words. In fact both of these tendencies are clearly in evidence: the first, in such movements as that to "rebuild the U.M.W.A.," the open support of the A. F. of L. crooks by the Department of Labor, the Norris-LaGuardia "anti-injunction" bill, etc., and the second, by the growing radical talk of A. F. of L. officials (McGrady speech, etc.), while their policies become ever more reactionary. The coming A. F. of L. convention will probably be, in words, the most "left" we have yet seen.

On the other hand, we must also be on our guard against the right opportunist Muste-Lovestone (Pepper) illusions about building the A. F. of L. into a great mass organization, with "millions streaming into the old unions" now that their membership, under pressure of the crisis, is waking up. We may be sure that the A. F. of L. leaders, assisted by the bosses, will prevent such a development. These leaders will try to make these unions job trusts of the employed workers. They will unhesitatingly split the old unions rather than allow them to become revolutionary mass organizations, while at the same time they will put themselves at the head of mass movements of the workers to wreck them. The T.U.U.L., instead of becoming useless, as Muste and Lovestone say, becomes all the more important as the rallying point for the organization of the great masses of unorganized workers, for those workers who will be split off from the A. F. of L. unions by the reactionary leaders to prevent the workers' carrying out a militant class struggle policy.

Never was the situation so favorable as now to work in the old old unions. The opportunity is at hand to build a powerful left wing movement, to win great masses of workers for our program against starvation, against imperialist war and for the defense of the Soviet Union, etc. But this work must be carried out in coordination with the building of the revolutionary T.U.U.L. unions. It must be done with our new methods of work. It must have the aim, not of building a Muste-Lovestone appendage of the A. F. of L. leaders, but of constructing a revolutionary weapon for the destruction of the ultra-reactionary clique.

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Fascism, Social Democracy and Communism

By W. KNORIN

NOTE: *In the struggle to win the majority of the working class, the 14th Plenum resolution places before the Party the task of "increasing, sharpening and improving its fight against social fascism, as the main enemy in the struggle for the successful mobilization of the masses in the fight against the bourgeois offensive and the war danger." This article of Comrade Knorin contains valuable lessons for our Party as well. We urge the comrades to read the article carefully and study it.*—EDITORS.

THE presidential elections in Germany are over. Field Marshal Hindenburg has been elected president of Germany for a further seven years. Among the bourgeois parties there is none which is dissatisfied with the re-election of Hindenburg. Hindenburg was and remains the faithful executor of the policy of finance capital.

But the social democrats and the national socialists are also satisfied. The social democracy is satisfied because it has proved by the successful mobilization of the masses at the elections for Hindenburg that it is necessary as a tool for the further carrying out of the policy of finance capital. The national socialists are satisfied because the big growth of their party increases their role in the carrying out of the open fascist dictatorship by finance capital.

The Weimar Constitution served to deceive the masses; it was a democratic phrase which concealed the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Of this constitution, however, there is now very little left. Nevertheless, this constitution, which helped the bourgeoisie to deceive the masses at the beginning of 1919 and to hold them back from the fight for the Soviet power, is even now not an entirely useless scrap of paper lightly to be thrown aside. "Democracy," which is becoming steadily more fascist, still remains the best instrument for carrying out the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Even now it is most expedient to carry out the liquidation of the last remnants of this "Demrocracy" "democratically," with the aid of paragraph 48 of the Weimar Constitution and with the aid of the

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"democratic" parties themselves which have the masses behind them. The Center Party and the social democracy remain even now the business managers of the German bourgeoisie precisely because, and only because, they still have on their side the masses of the workers and petty bourgeoisie, and in the course of 13 years participation in the government have still to a considerable extent preserved their influence over these masses.

Even if already before the war, capitalism had entered on the downward path of development the bourgeoisie nevertheless was still able to carry on without the support of the social democracy. The profound shaking of the capitalist system caused by the imperialist war, the commencement of the general crisis of capitalism and a number of proletarian revolutions have shown that the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie can continue its existence only with the immediate aid of such a social support of the bourgeoisie as the social democracy has become converted into since the beginning of the war. The immediate going over of the social democratic leaders to the bourgeoisie has rendered possible coalition and purely social democratic governments, to which the bourgeoisie has had recourse in its most difficult moments.

This necessity to make use of the constant support of the social democracy is an expression of the fact that present-day capitalism is a dying capitalism, which has entered the period of its general crisis.

But the present crisis and the increasing shakiness of the capitalist system, the cessation of the growth of the influence of the social democracy, and its decline, which has already commenced, have compelled the bourgeoisie, in order to save their rule, to set up a fascist mass party, to proceed to a forced development of their own fighting organizations. This explains the tremendous growth of the national socialist party in the last few years.

National socialism, however, has not succeeded in penetrating the main masses of the working class. It possesses no traditions, and unites in its ranks the most varied class elements, from the Hohenzollern prince August Wilhelm to various groups of unemployed workers.

FASCISM AND SOCIAL FASCISM

The Hohenzollern princes were driven to the national socialists above all by the fear that the successes of the revolutionary movement would rob them of those enormous sums which present-day Germany is paying out to them. The unemployed and the poor

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peasants who have not yet recognized the revolutionary path, have been driven to the national socialists by their hatred of the regime which has left them in the position of semi-slaves and brought them terrible unemployment, starvation and misery.

The petty bourgeois masses have been driven to the national socialists by the economic crisis, which has plunged whole strata of the petty bourgeoisie into misery. The fighting organization of the bourgeoisie can achieve temporary successes in the fight against the revolutionary workers' organizations. But it cannot play a big role in leading the country for a long period without the co-operation and without the immediate help of such an organization for swindling the masses as is the social democracy.

In a country like Germany, in which the proletariat forms the majority of the population, the exploiting class cannot maintain power in its hands if it is supported only by fighting organizations consisting in the main of petty bourgeois elements; it cannot do without the immediate support of the social democracy and of the reformist trade unions.

Social democracy and fascism fulfill by different methods the same social task, the task of shattering the class organizations of the workers and supporting and consolidating capitalism. But this does not in any way mean that there exist no differences and no differences of opinion between the social democracy and the national socialists, who are the largest fascist fighting organization, that they are united in everything.

The Communists do not believe that there is no difference between a government of the social democracy and a government of the national socialists, between a government which in addition to terror, functions *above all by deception,* and a government which in addition to deception, functions *above all by terror.* But the Communists declare to the masses that both the social democracy and the national socialists fulfill and will fulfill *only the will of finance capital.*

The Communists say to the masses, that the growth of fascism in Germany was possible thanks only to the 18 years' treachery and the 13 years' administrative activity of the social democracy, whose policy consisted in holding the workers back from the fight and securing profits and all liberties to the bourgeoisie. The Communists say to the masses that the present attack by fascism was possible thanks only to the circumstance that the social democracy have converted the old, powerful class organizations of the German proletariat into an instrument for subjecting the working class to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie; that the social democrats, in spite

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of the hysterical cry about the fascist danger, do not think of departing from this policy.

It was thanks only to this policy of the social democracy that the idea could arise of the possibility of shattering the revolutionary labor movement of Germany, a thing which neither the Iron Chancellor Bismark, nor Wilhelm II could ever have thought of.

Between the social democracy and the national socialists there exist differences of opinion, *but these differences of opinion are between two factions which are striving to maintain capitalism and fighting against the proletarian revolution.*

The *first antagonism* between the social democracy and the national socialists, between "democracy" and the open fascist dictatorship, concerns the *question of the "ideology" for the working masses.* The social democrats consider it necessary to make use of the old traditions of the labor movement for the purpose of supporting the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, to claim to be "Marxists," even if there is not a trace of Marxism left in them, to rely on the Weimar Constitution which they have themselves abolished, to praise the November revolution which they have destroyed.

DIFFERENCES OF OPINION BETWEEN TWO FACTIONS OF CAPITALISM

The national socialists, the German nationalists and their allies are of the opinion that these attempts of the social democrats to cloak themselves in the garb of revolutionary Marxists benefit the real Marxists and revolutionaries, the Communists. Therefore it is necessary to put an end to the phrases about Marxism, the class struggle and internationalism, to retain only what is absolutely necessary and unavoidable, a "socialism" which has been converted into a national "socialism" standing above the classes, which leaves private property in the hands of the exploiting class and promises the workers "das dritte Reich".

The *second difference of opinion* concerns the *question of the organizational methods of subjugating the working class in the interests of the bourgeoisie.*

The trade unions, which at one time were organs of the class struggle, have not by a long way ceased to enjoy the authority of class organizations among the working masses, and are still regarded by a considerable portion of the working class as organs for their defence. With the aid of the theory of the "lesser evil" and the corrupt bureaucracy, the social democrats have succeeded in utilizing these organizations as social supports of the bourgeoisie.

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The bourgeoisie are now beginning to doubt the capacity of the social democracy and fear that the working masses which are in these organizations will become a reservoir of power for Communism. The social democrats are persistently endeavoring to show the advantages of their methods as compared with the methods of direct fascist violence.

The *third series of differences of opinions* are differences of opinion regarding the "*apparatus*". The social democracy has created a tremendous cadre of State, trade union, and co-operative employees and officials, parliamentary deputies and municipal councillors, who form an *exceedingly important part of the labor aristocracy* in Germany.

The national socialists have gathered into their ranks a great number of former Hohenzollern officers and officials, considerable strata of intellectuals, whose oppositional attitude is due to the circumstance that they have not all been able to get comfortable jobs under the present regime. Their aim—to live in the service of the State—cannot be achieved unless the social democrats and other "Republicans" are expelled from the State apparatus.

These differences of opinion do not in any way mean that the social democrats and the national socialists are irreconcilable opponents. On the contrary, the character of even these differences of opinion shows the possibility of reconciling them and using both parties simultaneously for the purpose of rescuing the bourgeoisie.

Wherein lies the difference between the present "democracy" and the open fascist dictatorship?

The essence of the "democracy" of *Severing* and *Braun* consists in making use of the organizations, which were once organs of the class struggle, for the maintenance and consolidation of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie by doing away with all democracy within these organizations. The social democrats expell all active class-conscious elements from the mass organizations and utilize these organizations as strikebreakers, hold back the workers from the fight by telling them stories about the attack of reaction, the hopelessness of fighting and the danger of a fascist putsch, and employing methods of direct terror in the fight against the real revolutionary class organizations of the proletariat.

The essence of the "democracy" of Severing and Braun consists in preserving, in form, the "democratic" achievements of the working class (freedom of the press, of meetings, strike and universal suffrage), whilst the freedom of strike is not used and the freedom of the press and meetings are converted into freedom for the supporters of capitalism. For with such a utilization these remnants

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of the achievements of the working class can only help the social democracy to deceive the workers.

The difference between "democracy" and the open fascist dictatorship consists in that the open fascist dictatorship will increase the terror by transferring to the military and police apparatus a part of the function which the apparatus of the social democratic organizations hitherto fulfilled with "social methods". For the purpose of fulfilling these tasks, the bourgeoisie have created the fighting organizations and the political apparatus of the national socialist party.

THE COMMUNISTS ONLY FIGHTERS AGAINST FASCISM

The chief meaning of the fight between the various groups within the German gourgeoisie, and before all between the national socialists and the social democrats, turns on the question, how far such an alteration of the methods of State administration accords with the interests of the bourgeoisie, to whom must the bourgeoisie give the preference in the conduct of State affairs: to the old, experienced social democracy and catholic Centre, aided by the fascist fighting organizations, or to the fascists, who will work together with the Centre and rely upon the experience and the actual aid of the social democracy.

The Prussian elections possess great importance in regard to the solution of this question, which is a complicated one for the bourgeoisie.

Only the Communists are conducting a real fight against fascism. They know that the entry of the national socialists and of the German nationalists into the government will result in a strengthening of the terror and a deterioration of the economic situation of the masses, a worsening of the conditions for the work of the Communist Party, the withdrawal of the elementary civil rights of the workers. Nevertheless they cannot for a moment support the social democrats, who shout hysterically about the fight against fascism and at the same time destroy the workers organizations from within and deliver the working class over to fascism. To mobilize, organize and weld together the forces of the proletariat for the fight against the bourgeoisie, for the overthrow of their dictatorship, that is the sole guiding line followed by the Communists.

To organize the fight against the exceptional laws, against wage cuts and against the fascist terror, on the basis of the united front from below, to win the workers away from the social democracy, to weld them together into independent revolutionary class organi-

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zations—that is the only way to win the majority of the working class and the only real method of fighting against fascism.

Therefore the Communists come forward quite independently at every election and cannot enter into any bloc or agreement with the social democracy. They must expose the treachery and deceit of social democracy.

The social democrats declare that the Communists want Hitler to come into power. It is precisely the social democracy that prepares the way for the open fascist dictatorship, that disarms the proletariat. The social democrats point out that the proletariat has become weaker, whilst in reality it is increasing in strength every day. They talk about the attack of counter-revolution, while at the same time they say nothing about the growth of the forces of revolution. They write about the mobilization of the national socialist storm detachments during the presidential elections, but a dozen times express their confidence in General Groener, who has allowed this mobilization. The social democracy has throttled, and continues to throttle, every strike of the workers against wage cuts and dismissals; it is now discussing the question whether Hitler should be admitted into the government.

The Communists have already lost hundreds of fighters who have been foully murdered by the fascists. They know that an open fascist dictatorship would demand still more victims from their ranks. No thinking Communist could for a moment entertain the idea of allowing the most naked reaction to come into power on the pretext that this would aggravate the situation and then it would be easier to overthrow the whole regime.

The Communists have declared a thousand times that *there is only one enemy which must be overthrown, namely the bourgeoisie.* In order to overthrow the bourgeoisie it is necessary that the majority of the working class exert all their efforts. The social democracy holds the workers back from the struggle. It helps the bourgeoisie and is therefore the chief enemy *within the working class*, and unless it is shattered the bourgeoisie cannot be overthrown.

The Communists are ready, without a moment's hesitation, to set up a *united front with all social democratic workers* who wish to fight for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. They must fight against the social democracy, above all because the social democracy is the main social buttress of the bourgeoisie, because it is impossible to vanquish the bourgeoisie without having crushed the social democracy. Only people who wish by cunning deception to bring about a capitulation of the workers to the bourgeoisie could propose an agreement with the social democracy.

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Only the Communists are conducting the fight against fascism. The chief task in this fight is to win the majority of the proletariat and to prepare it for the deciding class battles.

The Communists, by setting up their own organizations, are thereby at the same time conducting a fight against the destruction by the social democracy from within, of the mass organizations which are in its hands. The Communists expose the submission of the social democracy to the fascist State and the conversion of the reformist trade unions into strikebreaking organizations. The Communists will place themselves at the head of the working masses in order, with all their forces to protect the workers' organizations against the fascist conspiracy.

Utilizing the entire apparatus of the bourgeoisie and of the bourgeois State, the social democracy still succeeds by lies and slanders in maintaining its hold of the masses. The present stage is a stage of the fight of the Communist Party for winning the majority of the working class. The forces of the proletariat are growing. An indication of this growth of the revolutionary forces of the proletariat of Germany is the circumstance that the counter-revolution is compelled to seek a sharper weapon against the revolution than that which the deception by means of the theory of the "lesser evil" represents; it has to supplement persuasion with the revolver in order to prevent the going over of still larger masses to the camp of revolution.

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Lessons of Two Recent Strikes

IN THE LIGHT OF THE E.C.C.I. RESOLUTION ON "LESSONS OF STRIKE STRUGGLES IN THE U. S. A."

By JACK STACHEL

THE E.C.C.I. resolution on the *Lessons of Strike Struggles in the U. S. A."** is the first fundamental analysis of the experiences that the revolutionary unions in the United States have accumulated over a period of nearly three years. Though this resolution deals only with the lessons of the strike struggles in the United States, it is of international importance. It ranks in importance with the *Strassburg resolution.*** Its great value lies in the fact that it contains important lessons that could not be drawn at the time of the Strassburg resolution. At that time in most countries, including the United States, we were only at the beginning of the building of the revolutionary trade unions. Now we can already examine the actual struggles carried through by the revolutionary unions. In this resolution the E.C.C.I. not only gave a thorough examination of the leadership of strikes by the T.U.U.L. unions and our Party, but did this in the light of the experiences in the strike leadership the world over. While the Strassburg resolution laid down the line to be followed by the red trade union movement, the present resolution already deals with the actual practice of the red unions. The revolutionary trade union movement of the United States and our Party must now take up seriously the mastering of these two resolutions if we are to overcome the basic weaknesses in the strike leadership and be able to successfully conduct the struggles of the masses, and through these struggles revolutionize the masses.

One of the outstanding features in our strike leadership has been the making of the same mistakes over again. This must lead us to the conclusion that our mistakes were not of an accidental character but that there was something fundamentally wrong with our methods of strike leadership. It is in this light that we must study the E.C.C.I. resolution which deals mainly with the miners strike, the most outstanding struggle ever conducted by our Party and the Trade Union Unity League, as well as with the strikes of the textile workers in Lawrence and Paterson. We must not only retrace our

* Published in the May, 1932 issue of *The Communist*, also in the pamphlet *Toward Rexolutionary Mass Work.* Workers Library Publishers, ten cents.

** Published in pamphlet form: *Problems of Strike Strategy.* Workers Library Publishers, ten cents.

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steps in these strikes in order to discover why and how we made these mistakes. We must also take up the study of the strikes that followed and see to what extent we have overcome these weaknesses to what extent we have changed the methods of strike leadership in line with the resolution. And above all to discover what steps we must take to guarantee that in the future these mistakes will not be repeated. Thus far we are not able to discuss the lessons of strikes which we led after we have received and studied the resolution. The reason for this is because we have not conducted any struggles during this period. No doubt this is not divorced from the bad leadership of strikes in the past as can be revealed by the present situation in the Ohio coal fields where the United Mine Workers of America is now conducting a strike in the very same fields where the National Miners Union conducted the strike last summer. In future issues we will take up our role in this strike as well as in the strikes of the miners this year in the Anthracite, Illinois, etc. At the present time we wish to limit ourselves to two strikes that were led by our unions in 1932 before the E.C.C.I. resolution was available to us. In these two strikes we shall only be able to see to what extent the fundamental weaknesses laid down in the resolution still prevail and to what extent we ourselves have learned from the strikes in the past. One thing is definite, that a study of these two strikes will convince us of the absolute correctness of the resolution and the necessity to make its contents the property of the whole revolutionary movement.

The two strikes selected are the miners strike in Kentucky and the dress strike in New York. Why are these two strikes selected? First, because these were the outstanding strikes we led in the year 1932, just as the strikes of the miners in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and the textile strikes in Lawrence and Paterson were the outstanding strikes we led in 1931. Secondly, because these two strikes respectively are of the same character as those of the miners and the textile workers in 1931. Not that there do not exist very important dissimiliarities. But the fundamental features with regard to the leadership of the strike are the same. In the Kentucky strike, like in the Pennsylvania strike, the N.M.U. was in the leadership and the role of the U.M.W.A. was one of the open strikebreaking. In Kentucky, like in Pennsylvania, the U.M.W.A. had discredited itself among the masses, its organization was liquidated, thus making it possible for the N.M.U. to assume the leadership of the strike. In the case of the dress strike, like in the Paterson and Lawrence strikes, there were two unions, two strikes, two strike committees, and in both cases, the Muste-Lovestone wing of the A. F. of L. was in the leadership of large masses of workers on strike.

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I. THE KENTUCKY STRIKE

What were the chief lessons drawn by the E.C.C.I. resolution from the Pennsylvania miners strike? 1. *The failure to properly prepare the strike.* The resolution states:

> "The *preparatory work* for the miners' strike was very weak, not carried out in due time and not sufficiently thorough . . . the work among the miners did not receive enough systematic attention, the militancy of the miners was underestimated, and above all, the development of the local organizations of the Party and the red trade unions in the whole district of Pennsylvania was in a weak and neglected state when the strike broke out. This was *one of the main causes for the weaknesses* which became apparent in the leadership of the strike and contributed to the fact that after twelve weeks, the strike ended with a defeat for the workers."

What can we say about the Kentucky strike in the light of the above criticism of the Pennsylvania strike? Have we taken seriously the preparations in Kentucky? Was our preparatory work better than in the Pennsylvania strike? There is not one among us who will hesitate for a moment in replying to this question. And we will be compelled to answer in the negative. What was the situation in Kentucky? First, there was no Party organization whatsoever. And such a situation here is not the same as in Pennsylvania. There we could count on the quick mobilization of large numbers of workers who have had considerable experience in the class struggle, who had gone through the struggles in the U.M.W.A., the struggles against the Lewis machine under our leadership, who had been at one time or another members of the Party, the International Labor Defense, and who were still members of fraternal organizations under our influence, and who read the Party press. So that when we compare the absence of Party organization in Pennsylvania with Kentucky these differences must not be lost sight of. With regard to the N.M.U. it is true that there was a very strong influence for the N.M.U. but very little actual local organization and even those locals that did exist had very little leadership. We had no organization in the mines and because of this failed to see that the main base of the N.M.U. was among the unemployed blacklisted miners who, though they were very much for the strike, could not strike, though they could be organized to support the strike, and to fight for relief from the mine operators and the government. If we add to this the severe terror existing in Kentucky, the fact that most of our organizations that did exist were underground organizations, that most of our leading local forces were either in jail or outside the strike territory, then we can readily see that we were not prepared for such a major struggle.

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From this some comrades draw only one conclusion, that we made the mistake in calling the strike. Undeniably, given these conditions, we were wrong in calling the strike when we did, with the preparations that we had carried through. But this is not the way to face this question. The important thing for us to examine is why we did not make any preparations, and what actions we should have taken in the light of the existing situation. We can not place the question as some comrades do—either preparations for strike or strike. We must put the question preparation for strike and not adopt a policy of "permanent preparations" and no strike! Nor can we place the question as other comrades do—either local strikes or the mass strike for Kentucky. We must examine what are the wrong conceptions that prevailed with regard to the preparations for the strike, and what steps should have been and were not taken to prepare the strike. Only in this way will we be able to understand how to overcome this situation in the future.

In the year 1930 the U.M.W.A. recruited thousands of miners in Kentucky and led them in strike in the spring of 1931. The U.M.W.A. betrayed the miners and deserted them. Thousands of miners were blacklisted. The best elements were thrown into jail. The miners who became disillusioned with the U.M.W.A. turned to the N.M.U. After a while the N.M.U. sent an organizer into the Kentucky field. This comrade made the first contacts for the N.M.U. and brought a large delegation to the Pittsburgh Conference in July, 1931. Between August, 1931 and November, 1931 there was little organized work carried on by the N.M.U. During this whole period not a single member was recruited to the Party. The relationship between the N.M.U. national office and the Kentucky field was mainly through correspondence. By November the active elements amongst the Kentucky miners who were themselves not blacklisted miners but were in hiding outside the sections where the strike was to take place, informed us that the miners were ready to strike, and that they demand that a strike shall be called. We at first hesitated to sanction a strike on the ground that we were not prepared, but as yet we took very few steps to prepare for the strike. Finally in December a conference was called and a strike date was set. But as yet there were no Party organizations set up and the N.M.U. local organizations were in no better state. In Harlan County, the central field, we had no organization whatsoever and our organizers had hardly any contact with this strategic field. But our comrades were swayed by the sentiments of the unemployed and blacklisted miners and without Party or union organization, without having prepared the employed miners, without

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organizing to break the severe terror, decided to call a general strike of the miners.

What should have been our course in the Kentucky fields? First of all, steps should have been taken at once to build the Party organization. Without a Party organization it was impossible to conduct a successful struggle, particularly under the conditions prevailing in Kentucky. Second, we should have organized the struggle of the blacklisted miners for relief and unemployment insurance. We should have made clear to the unemployed miners that they can not strike, because they are not inside the mines. It was the failure to show to these miners how they can struggle for bread that let to the situation in which these blacklisted miners took up the fight for an immediate strike. Third, we should have organized our first contacts amongst the employed miners and organized them on the basis of the mine. The unemployed miners could be very useful to make contacts with the employed miners. Fourth, we should have systematically developed the initiative of the miners themselves and build from amongst them a leadership that is capable of leading the struggle. Special attention had to be paid to this important task, particularly in view of the tendencies that were very strong among the miners here to base themselves merely on the spontaneity of the masses, to resort to individual terror to meet the sharp terror of the operators and the government. Fifth, we had to develop a broad mass defence movement. Sixth, it was necessary to develop the struggles in a number of mines around the immediate burning grievances. Seventh, it was essential to take up with the miners a broad agitation for a general strike, and through a thorough discussion to popularize the demands, the methods of carrying on the fight, etc. Eighth, we had to organize the strike machinery locally, the relief and defence machinery, a strike fund, etc. Ninth, popularization of the necessity of mobilizing support for this historic struggle that was being developed in Kentucky should have been carried on throughout the mining fields of the country and amongst the whole working class, particularly amongst the revolutionary workers. Only in this way, by having a clear perspective of the tasks ahead of us, of the obstacles to be overcome, of the relation of forces, of the necessity to prepare the miners against further manoeuvers by the U.M.W.A., by actually developing the struggles of the unemployed miners, and the struggle around local grievances where possible in defence of their interests and in the course of these struggles preparing for a more decisive mass strike.

But we did not do these things. First, we neglected all these tasks. Then, we ourselves, basing ourselves on the blacklisted miners,

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yielding to spontaneity, rushed headlong without regard to the actual situation and called a general strike. This was not an accidental mistake. It was the same mistake as in the miners strike of Pennsylvania, the same mistake of underestimation of the preparation for strikes that is quite general. Only here the whole setting was such that this serious weakness in our approach to strikes was exposed more nakedly than ever before.

Under such conditions it was of course very difficult to carry through a correct policy *during* the strike. During this strike therefore we again see that even on a larger scale the mistakes in the actual conduct of the strike were much greater than in the Pennsylvania strike. There was no determined course to build the local trade union and Party organizations during the strike. The leading comrades sent in from the outside because of the severe terror and partly because they underestimated this terror were almost as a body placed behind bars and were not replaced throughout the strike, except in one or two cases. Thus there was no experienced leadership in the strike. These mistakes of failure to build and develop the local organizations which were largely overcome in the later stages of the Pennsylvania strike were not overcome in the Kentucky strike. And those comrades from the outside who did remain carried on the work in such a manner that they appeared to the miners as outsiders who were helping them, doing things for them, and not that the miners themselves were leading their strike. As long as things appeared to be going well it was accepted by the miners, but in the end the miners placed the whole responsibility for the results upon the "outsiders." This did not help to build the N.M.U. and the Party. All the mistakes pointed out in the E.C.C.I. resolution with regard to the shortcomings in the development of proletarian democracy and discipline in the strike, of establishing correct relations of the top leadership with the mass of the strikers were of course many times stronger in the Kentucky strike.

THE CONDUCT OF THE STRIKE

In the very first days of the strike it became clear that there was no mass response among the employed miners, and that in the most important field, that of Harlan County, the strike did not take root at all. What should have been done under such conditions? When we bear in mind that only towards the end of March was the strike officially called off then it is clear what should not have been done. At the time the strike was called off, and for weeks before that, there was in reality no strike except for the unemployed blacklisted miners to whose number more were added because of the strike. After a few days, when it became clear

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what was the nature of the response of the employed miners, the whole strike should have been reorientated on a different course. The strike as a general strike should have been called off, and the mines in those localities where the strikers were solid should have been kept on strike for local demands, and our full force and support directed towards the winning of the strikes of these mines. Why was this policy not adopted? Undoubtedly an important reason was the method of leadership. The failure to build and rely upon the local organizations, and local leadership, the failure to establish live contacts with the mass of the miners, the shortcomings in the practice of proletarian democracy, the failure through such proletarian democracy to establish the self discipline of the miners, all these mistakes and weaknesses contributed to the failure to reorganize the strike on a new basis.

But there was a more fundamental reason why this was not done. It was the lack of courage and decisiveness on this question on the part of the leading committee. It was a fear to recognize the actual situation and a consequent fatalistic hope that somehow, something will turn up that will improve the situation. In fact there were the elements of a complete abandonment of leadership and adopting a drifting policy. In the Pennsylvania strike such a situation arose many weeks after the strike when more than half the miners had deserted the strike without the strike committee having taken any action. There were also the bad methods of leadership, the failure to establish real proletarian democracy, the failure to establish a correct perspective, the failure to take up in time a discussion of the state of the strike and the next steps, which led many miners to lose confidence in the strike committee and to return to work in an unorganized and unauthorized manner. In Kentucky the very response to the strike raised this question at the very early stage of the strike. We say that the E.C.C.I. is correct in stating about the Pennsylvania strike that—

> "Owing to the fact that the strike committee not only recognized the situation among the mass of the strikers too late, but also because it did not have the understanding and real Bolshevik courage to organize and carry through a well-ordered retreat at the right moment, it made a split among the workers possible, and indeed, in such a way that the majority of the miners who had gone back to the miners appeared to be strikebreakers to the minority and that the employers could make use of this situation in order to victimize thousands of workers of the active minority. This bad outcome of the strike became a serious obstacle for the strengthening of the union after the strike and especially for the further development of revolutionary work in this region"

Then with many times that force the above words of the E.C.C.I.

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resolution apply to the strike in Kentucky. And with equal force we can add what the E.C.C.I. resolution states on the Pennsylvania strike that had we carried through such a retreat in time—

> "The masses would not have had the impression that the Communists, without consideration for the masses, want to carry on an endless strike, but on the contrary precisely after a well-ordered retreat, they would have realized that the Communists also know how, when there is no longer any prospect of winning the strike, when the greatest part of the masses is already exhausted (in this case did not respond to the strike.—J. S.) to call off the strike in a concerted and well-ordered manner."

Such an impression that the Communists "without consideration for the masses want to carry on an endless strike" gained further strength by the nature of the demands that were put forward at the beginning of the strike and the failure to reorientate the strike on different local demands in those places where the miners continued to be on strike. An argument is brought forward by some comrades that the miners themselves have worked out these demands. In the first place this is far from being entirely correct. The mass of the employed miners had very little to do with the formulation of the demands. The demands were worked out by mostly the blacklisted and unemployed miners. And besides we must not forget that while we must, through the broadest discussion with the workers, adopt the demands for the struggle, this does not in any way relieve the Communists and the strike leadership of the duty to point out to the workers all the conditions, the relation of forces, etc., which they know as leaders from the experiences of many struggles, and of being acquainted with the various elements that enter into the struggle, and its possible outcome, such as the forces of the workers, the strength of the employers, the reformists, the conditions of the industry, the seasonal fluctuations, etc. This whole situation—the maintaining of a general strike when in reality it did not exist—the nature of the demands, the failure to energetically work for individual settlements on a new basis, all this could not but create unclarity among the strikers as to what "was the main object of the Communists in the strike." The E.C.C.I. resolution points out that in the Pennsylvania strike there was such lack of clarity on the part of the strike leadership and the Party as a whole.

> "A lack of clarity remained as to what was to be characterized as the *main object* that the Communists were to pursue in the strike struggle; that if one wants to state the main object in *one* word, and in doing so, avoid the danger of one-sidedness, then neither the simple winning of the material results which are con-

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> tained in the strike demands, nor the mere utilization of the strike for the strengthening of the Party organizations should be designated as the main object, but that, on the contrary, the *revolutionization of the striking workers* should be the main object. The most important thing is that the Communists strive, through their agitation as well as through their entire participation in the strike, to give the broad masses of the strikers the experience and the firm conviction that the *Communists have advocated or carried through correct strike tactics and strike leadership*. It is, however, impossible to instill this conviction into the masses of the striking workers if the Communists do not exert all their energy in the struggle against the employers so as to win the strike."

It is true that this problem did not arise in Kentucky in the same manner as it did in the Pennsylvania strike. There exist no documents, nor other evidence that the Party and the Communists in the strike leadership placed one task as against the other. But it can not be said that this problem did not arise among the strikers and that the whole conduct of the strike could not and was not utilized by our enemies to try to prove that the Communists had "their own interests" in the strike. This, of course, is a lie. Our Party has no interests separate and apart from the working class. But the methods of leading the strike determines in the minds of the workers what the aims are. In this connection it must be pointed out that the support that was mobilized from the outside, from amongst the rest of the miners, from the rest of the workers, was quite inadequate for such a struggle.

But it would be wrong to take the position that there were no positive achievements in the strike, though the bad affects are undoubtedly great and must be overcome. The fact alone that such a strike was called by the National Miners Union in the Southern state of Kentucky where there rages the most severe terror, makes it possible to apply the words of the E.C.C.I. resolution to the Pennsylvania strike with equal force to the Kentucky strike that—

> ". . . it is to be emphasized as a *Bolshevik deed* of our American comrades, that despite all weaknesses of their organization they resolutely placed themselves at the head of this gigantic struggle."

Despite the tremendous weaknesses in the building of the Party, the Communist Party did succeed in recruiting dozens of miners into the Party and for the first time establish our organization among the miners in Kentucky, despite the terror of the Rockefeller and Ford state government. While there were great shortcomings in the mobilization of the Negro miners, there were Negro workers drawn into the struggle, and joint work on the basis of equality was established between the Negro and white workers. New strata

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of workers were drawn into the struggle and they gained their first experiences under our leadership.

The field for our work is good despite the serious mistakes in the strike. This is so because of the continued attacks of the employers and the state and the inability of the U.M.W.A. to make headway amongst the miners. But now we are before a real test. It is not an easy task we are facing, but a task which we can not evade. We must strengthen our forces in Kentucky. Develop the local leadership. We must pay the greatest attention to the development of the Party and the local organizations of the N.M.U. We must quietly entrench ourselves inside the mines on the basis of a systematic concentration of our forces. We must undertake and develop the struggles of the mass of the unemployed and blacklisted miners for relief from the operators, the local, county and state government. The fight for unemployment insurance must be made into a state-wide struggle. The election struggle provides great possibilities for the development of the struggles of the miners, for the broadest agitation and propaganda among the miners. It must be utilized to the fullest extent. We must give attention to the struggle against all opportunist tendencies no matter whether they are open right opportunist tendencies (support of "good men," against Negro rights, capitulation before terror, etc.) or covered with radical phrases (individual terror, etc.). We must not for a moment forget that we must carry on a constant struggle against the U.M.W.A. and I.W.W. misleaders, etc. We must continue and increase the support from the outside, mobilizing the masses throughout the country against the fascist terror in Kentucky. In doing this we must fight against tendencies to allow the liberals (Civil Liberties Union, Churchmen, etc.) to penetrate among the workers.

II. THE NEW YORK DRESS STRIKE

The strike of the dressmakers in New York carried through by our union was in a great measure successful. Our union succeeded in enrolling large masses of unorganized workers in the strike, so that throughout the strike more than six thousand workers fought under the leadership of our union. Increased wages and improved conditions were won for the strikers. More than three thousand unorganized workers joined the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union. About three hundred Negro workers were involved in the strike. Large numbers of young workers of all nationalities (Italian, Spanish, etc.) were brought into the struggle. These are important victories for our union. And particularly so in the face of the fact that the strike conducted by the I.L.G.W.U., and in which the

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Lovestone-Zimmerman group played an important role as part of the treacherous policy of betrayal brought a worsening of the conditions to the members of the I.L.G.W.U. The fact that the elections in the most important I.L.G.W.U. locals in New York to their national convention resulted in about 40 per cent of the total vote of some 5,000 being cast for the left opposition candidates and program shows that the membership of the I.L.G.W.U. is beginning to see the treachery of the Shlesingers and Zimmermans, and the successful leadership and results of the dress strike led by our union.

Our union achieved these results because it learned from the lessons of the dress strike of 1931 and overcame most of the mistakes made at that time. In the 1931 strike, the demands originally adopted were such that the majority of the members of our union were against them. They had been hatched in small conferences of leaders without any participation of the workers. They were merely handed down to the workers through discipline and then changed at the last moment. Thus the strike was demoralized before it began. In the 1931 strike the entire conduct of the strike and its developments was not only independent of the strike committee, but was even kept secret from the strike committee, which in reality was no strike committee. In that strike there was the most sectarian approach, not only to the members of the I.L.G.W.U. but even to the unorganized workers. There were no serious preparations for that strike. In the present strike there was tremendous improvement. Demands were worked out through large gatherings and conferences not only of the union membership but also of the unorganized workers. The strike committee was a real living factor in the strike. The policy of the united front was successfully developed among large sections of the unorganized. A number of important steps were taken to reach the membership of the I.L.G.W.U. It is this policy that brought the successful results of the strike.

With regard to the mobilization of the Negro workers for the strike we made progress, but not at all satisfactory. Only 300 Negro workers were drawn into the strike while there are many thousands of Negro workers in the dress industy. Only a small number were involved in the I.L.G.W.U. strike. The total number of strikers in both strikes were close to 15,000 out of some 40,000, or at least one-third. But no more than 10 per cent of the Negro dressmakers were involved in both strikes—perhaps much less. How can we explain that? Certainly not by the opportunist conception that the Negro dressmakers could not have been drawn

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into the strike in larger numbers. Nor will it do to point out that we had a larger number of Negro dressmakers on strike than did the I.L.G.W.U. This fact that the I.L.G.W.U. has not much influence over the Negro workers is only one more reason why it was possible to have drawn them into the struggle. The reason must be looked for right in the union itself and in its daily work. Our union throughout its existence had not taken up a determined course in mobilizing the Negro workers, though it did adopt a number of resolutions. But the Negro workers are not satisfied with resolutions. They are being discriminated against in the shops and they want the union to fight for them. This our union did in only very rare cases. Our union did not fight against white chauvinism in its ranks with sufficient force. Our union did not work out specific demands arising out of the discrimination of the Negro workers. There were even a number of cases of outrageous actions of some white workers which were not fought against with sufficient political firmness. All this is at the root of the small response of the Negro workers, plus the most important fact that while in the preparations some special activities were carried out they were not of sufficient magnitude to overcome the above existing condition. Our union must now give serious attention to overcoming this situation. This requires, first and foremost, a policy and firm line on the part of the union leadership.

THE UNITED FRONT POLICY

The greatest weakness in the dress strike was the application of the united front policy. This is the most important question that must be discussed in connection with the dress strike. Some of our comrades are still hesitant in admitting that there were any serious mistakes made on this question. They point to the successes. They point to the fact that the strikers under the leadership of the I.L.G.W.U. numbered only a couple of thousand more than in the strike under our leadership. They point to the fact that they have issued numerous leaflets asking the I.L.G.W.U. workers to join the strike of the "united front." But they fail to understand why there were two strikes, two strike committees, almost complete isolation of our strikers from the strikers of the I.L.G.W.U., and they hardly mention at all the fact that *the majority of the dress makers were not involved in the strike*. Certainly we can not separate the united front policy we pursued from the fact that the overwhelming majority of the workers did not join the strike. Unquestionably large sections of the workers faced with the attacks of the employers wanted to join the strike but decided not to do so

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because they were faced with two unions, two strikes, and they could not see how they could conduct a successful struggle under such conditions. We did not realize that the united front policy is not only a tactic during the struggle, but is one of the most important instruments for the mobilization of the masses for the struggle.

OUR APPROACH TO THE I.L.G.W.U. WORKERS

We did make efforts to reach the I.L.G.W.U. workers. But we were not successful in joining the ranks of the workers in the shops, and in reaching the workers of the shops controlled by the I.L.G.W.U. and convincing them that only our policy can unite the ranks of the workers. And why was this so? Because we did not come to the workers with very convincing arguments or proposals. What did we say to the workers organized in the I.L.G.W.U.? We said: "Unite with us in a mighty united front strike against the bosses and their International Union (I.L.G.W.U.—J. S.) which helps the bosses to continue the division in the ranks of the workers.

"Members of the International! The International is not your union. It is a union of the bosses. The strike which the International is planning to carry through is not your strike."

What did we ask the workers organized in the I.L.G.W.U. to do? We asked them to join the "united front" strike. But we assumed to speak in the name of all the workers in the industry, when the I.L.G.W.U. represented many more workers than were represented in and who elected the "united front" strike preparation committee in whose name we spoke. To these workers in the I.L.G.W.U. it could not but appear that we asked them to leave their union, the I.L.G.W.U., to which they still belonged, and to join or ally themselves with the red union. It is true that we did not make it a condition that they join our union as a basis for a united strike as we did in the 1931 dress strike. But it could still appear so to the I.L.G.W.U. workers when they knew that we did not represent the majority of the workers.

Then we proceeded in calling the strike on a date that was not known to the members of the I. L. G. W. U. and even kept secret until the last day from our own union membership and the mass of the unorganized workers of course. This could not but create the impression among the I.L.G.W.U. workers and large sections of the unorganized workers that we wanted to have "our own" strike and that we asked the rest of the workers to join it under our terms. Here the word of the E.C.C.I. resolution on the Lawrence and Paterson strike, though the conditions were entirely the same, apply very well when the resolution states:

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> "Our comrades in Lawrence and Paterson have tried to carry out the task of the struggle for *independent leadership of the strike* in a sectarian manner. In this struggle, wherever we first have minorities on our side in comparison with the reformist trade unions, we are inevitably faced with real difficulties that can be overcome only by successful work for the mobilization of the masses for independent struggles. But our comrades wanted to skip over these real difficulties and tasks of mass mobilization and for this purpose in Lawrence and also in Paterson they made attempts to take the leadership of the strike into their own hands without the consent of the broad masses of the workers and on that account they inevitably failed."

As already mentioned the conditions were not the same in the dress strike as in Paterson and Lawrence. Here we had an established leadership that is known among the workers. Our unions carried through some real preparations among the unorganized workers. The small shops, the fact that not all the employers belonged to the employers organization, the strong competition in the industry, the correct policy of making settlements where possible, all this led to the winning of the demands of the workers, the gaining of new members to our union. But it is no victory for us that the workers organized in the I.L.G.W.U. had to go back to work under worsened conditions, and that we were so isolated from the workers in the I.L.G.W.U. that, though there was resistance to the agreement, the agreement was put over by the Shlesingers and the Lovestonite Zimmerman. Nor can we forget that the mass of the workers were not involved in the strike, and that all this will make it very difficult to maintain the gains that we have made in the strike. What should we have done in this situation? Again the words of the resolution on Paterson and Lawrence do apply also to the dress strike:

> "The real application of the tactic of the united front from below would have necessitated the following in Lawrence and Paterson: (1) that before the strike, as well as in the course of the strike, our comrades should have daily been in the closest living contact with the masses of the workers who were under the influence of the reformists; (2) that they should have proposed to the masses of the workers that in the interest of a solid united front they should themselves vote in the factories concerned as to when *the strike should begin* (emphasis mine.—J. S.) and should decide whether a united central strike committee should be elected to lead the entire strike, which workers should be delegated to the strike committee from the factories, what demands they should fight for, etc. The red trade unions should have *declared themselves ready to adopt the decisions of the majority of the workers in the interest of the common struggle against the employers* (emphasis mine.—J. S.); (3) that in the course of the struggle our comrades had to constantly

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> and everywhere in the midst of the masses of the workers, *also in all the reformist mass meetings* (emphasis mine.—J. S.) explain the objective conditions to the workers, the methods of the successful extension of the strike as well as the danger of a defeat which could not only arise through the actions of the employers and the police, but also through the tactics and treacherous capitulation of the reformist trade unions. Against this danger the Communists should in every way have led the masses forward to activity which is independent of the reformist trade union leaders and at the opportune moment, their removal from the strike leadership should have been proposed."

Can we say that this policy is not applicable to the dress strike despite the many different conditions that existed? We can not. Basically we had the same situation, and this policy was fully applicable. To what extent this policy could actually have been carried through can not be determined at this moment, but that this course should have been followed must be clear. And it was the failure to apply this policy, which in spite of all the achievements, stands out as a weakness in the strike leadership.

It is precisely this mistake that could give mass support amongst the most backward workers to the agitation and disruptive work of the renegade groups (Lovestone and Cannon) for the liquidation of the red union in the needle industry. But they will, of course, make little headway if we continue the work of building our unions, and correct the sectarian approach to the tactic of the united front from below.

Our union has already made considerable progress in exposing the Lovestone-Zimmerman group. The recent elections as mentioned are the proof of this Zimmerman and his followers have already taken further steps to cement their alliance with the Shlesingers and Dubinskys. This was very evident at the recent I.L.G.W.U. official leadership since the convention. And it is also evident that those honest rank and file workers who supported Zimmerman so long as we did not build the revolutionary oppositions in the A. F. of L. needle unions are now deserting this renegade group and are building a solid opposition against the Shlesingers and Zimmermans. We have a good situation in the needle industry at the present time. The recent convention of the I.L.G.W.U. and the Fur Workers A. F. of L. union have shown how far these unions have lost the support of the masses (a drop of 36,000 dues-paying members in the I.L.G.W.U. in two years) and that within them the genuine left opposition is gaining ground. On the other hand our union has increased its membership in the dress and fur section and among the knitgoods and other groups. Now we

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must intensify the work of building our red unions, strengthen the work of the oppositions, establish the united front and struggle of the workers in both unions, and continue the fight for the liquidation of the influence of the reformists, thus laying the basis for one class struggle union in the needle trades.

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The War Offensive—Tightening the Capitalist Dictatorship in the United States

By BILL DUNNE

TWO features stand out in the present political situation in the United States:

They are, first of all, the continuous and ever sharpening drive upon the living standards and the elementary political rights of the toiling section population and, second, the unprecedented flood of demagogy from all political parties of capitalism, Republican, Democratic and Socialist, and the allies of capitalism such as the leadership of the American Federation of Labor and the railway brotherhoods, from their Musteite "loyal opposition," and all the various political groupings of professional and middle class elements, and so forth.

The persistent downward trend of production, the shrinking markets, the preparations for imperialist war, to be seen on all sides," the growing army of unemployed, estimated recently by investigators as approaching 15,000,000, have placed a terrible strain on the governing machinery of American capitalism.

Not one single scheme of the "business leaders" combined with the emergency measures of the Hoover administration has brought about an increase in production and exchange.

The burden of the crisis upon the masses is becoming unbearable. It is now clear to great numbers of workers that the Wall Street-Hoover policy is what the Communists said it was at the very beginning of the crisis: *To utilize the mass unemployment and mass hunger to beat down the living standards of American workers to and below the subsistence level—to "Europeanize" the American workers.*

The drive against the wages, working conditions and living standards of American workers *has now involved the entire working class.* Not even the highly paid and organized workers like those in the building trades and on the railways have been exempted.

The income of the American working class has been slashed at least 50 per cent since 1929. Probably in no country in the world has the living standard of so many millions of workers been reduced so sharply in such a short space of time.

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In February, 1932, wages paid to workers in factories and on railroads were 50 per cent of the 1929 average, according to figures of *conservative* economists. According to these same figures, even when the reduction in prices is taken into consideration, wages still remain 40 per cent below 1929.

The average of course is far lower than this when we remember the millions of unemployed who receive nothing except what they can beg or steal, or the "organized" charity payments which are all far below the subsistence level.

The pressure of the crisis is revealing the inner weaknesses of capitalism as never before. There is a wave of "exposures" of graft and corruption on a gigantic scale in both government—especially municipal—and in banks and industrial corporations.

There is evident at the same time more of *an actual organizational alliance* of the police and military and semi-military bodies—fascist groups like those of the American legion and the gangster-underworld elements openly against the working class and its unemployed and employed organizations—as in Dearborn, Melrose Park near Chicago, Kentucky, and California, especially against our Party.

CREATING A WAR ATMOSPHERE

A new war for the redivision of the world among the imperialist powers having already begun in the Far East with the murderous onslaught of Japanese imperialism upon the Chinese masses, with invasion of the Soviet Union coming closer each day as a central part of the whole offensive, American imperialists and their hangers-on *are deliberately creating a war atmosphere.* Every capitalist sheet these days, either by its own editorial volition, or in quoting some capitalist spokesman, refers daily to the *"present emergency which equals or exceeds that of the world war,"* or uses some similar phrase.

Alfred E. Smith calls for support of the president. Newton Baker, secretary of war in the Wilson cabinet, calls on the American people to "follow their leader," the president. *"Follow the man at Washington, who must lead the nation for another year, anyhow,"* said Baker to the Lawyers' Club.

Following the brief explosion over the first introduction of the sales tax when the "progressive" demogagues were allowed to run wild a few days, led by LaGuardia of New York, the leading forces of both Republican and Democratic parties in the senate and house of representatives reached an agreement with Hoover for "balancing the budget," increasing mass taxation and giving further financial aid to banks, railways and industrial corporations.

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The Washington correspondent of the *New Republic* in the issue for May 18 says:

> "What the condition of the country clearly demands is a complete abandonment of political considerations and *some form of coalition government that could act in a non-partisan way.*" (Our emphasis.)

This correspondent continues:

> ". . . there are men in Washington whose judgment should carry weight who are convinced that 1933 will be very much worse so far as business is concerned than 1932, that we may look back and think of this as a fairly good year, that there will be no pulling out of this depression before 1934 or after."

In other words, leading capitalists have *no* perspective for ending the crisis by "normal" methods. Therefore *war.*

The formation of the committee of *twelve of the biggest finance-capitalists* in the country, a Morgan-Rockefeller combination headed by Owen D. Young, whose selection for this post followed on the heels of his *formal* refusal to campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination, and the program of this committee which, as announced, is to devise a "plan to employ Federal Reserve credit," is in line with the above perspective.

It follows the plan of the Wilson War Finance Corporation of the world war days, and according to the press Hoover has approved of the scheme.

It is clear that strenuous efforts are being made to strengthen the capitalist dictatorship worked through the Republican-Democratic two-party system, to purge the system of some of its inner weaknesses but at the same time to retain, for popular consumption, the traditions and formal methods of *administration* and *opposition.*

Senator Robinson of Arkansas, Democratic leader, LaGuardia, Republican, Garner, speaker of the house, Wagner, Democrat of New York, are all in agreement, according to press dispatches, with the exception of minor details, on the question of federal appropriations for public works and loans to state governments and corporations for "unemployment relief."

LaGuardia agrees with the proposal of Garner to place $100,000,000 in the hands of the president to be used as he sees fit in connection with the "present emergency."

This too is a duplicate of the $100,000,000 "emergency fund" presented to President Wilson to be used at his discretion during the war period. Wilson's fund was used for making war on the Soviet Union, for establishing a national system of spying upon workers and their organizations, etc.

What is the "emergency" that brings agreement for placing this

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huge sum in the hands of Hoover when millions of workers are hungry but for whom Congress has not yet appropriated one dime? *This is a war measure!*

What Hoover thinks the policy and powers of the president should be in such emergencies is shown by his statement in a letter to Congressman John J. McSwain, while the House Committee on Military Affairs was in session in April, 1924. Hoover stated:

> ". . . *a blanket authority to the President to fix prices, wages, transportation charges, compensation, embargoes on imports and exports, to exercise the war powers of requisition under circumstances that 75 per cent of the estimated value may be paid and the balance determined by the courts in case of disagreement,* suspend habeas corpus, and generally complete and absolute authority in all ramifications over the whole civilian life *with the provision that he may delegate these authorities. . . .*"

As far back as 1924, therefore, Hoover was preparing to be a war president.

With all this intensive organization of Democratic and Republican party leaders against the working class, the Socialist Party, the leaders of the American Federation of Labor, the railway brotherhoods and their Musteite wing, seize the opportunity to appear as anxious exponents of the needs and demands of the working class.

Norman Thomas says in the *New Leader* for May 21:

> "As usual in an emergency the old parties steal and largely spoil planks from the socialist platform. Thus, *Washington moves towards federal unemployment relief not only by direct aid, but by public works.* . . . In all this mess the one comfort is the *increasing clearness* with which *labor* is demanding action." (Our emphasis.)

In this manner Thomas, presidential candidate of the Socialist Party, tries to conceal the fact that what is happening in Washington is *not* a movement "towards federal unemployment relief," but a movement to *prevent* genuine federal relief and unemployment insurance, a movement for further robbery and suppression of the working class and the toiling farmers, for more concentration of power in the hands of Wall Street and its government.

By "labor" Thomas means the A. F. of L. and railway brotherhood heads, who, after accepting and aiding to put over the Wall Street-Hoover wage cutting and hunger drive, who after opposing unemployment insurance by every means within their power, *up to and including the expulsion of blocs of local unions favoring unemployment insurance,* are now forced by the rising resentment of the union membership and workers generally, to make "demands" which are simply demagogic yelps of the most contemptible kind, or are merely echoes of the coalition legislative program in Washington, in itself merely a stop gap for increasing mass anger.

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What does President Green say? What is his estimate of the needs of the situation affecting practically the entire membership of the A. F. of L.

Speaking *under the auspices of the Washington Chamber of Commerce* on May 13, Green said:

> "The immediate problem is to *place men and women now idle at work in the industrial establishments and business enterprises of the nation,* thus restoring their buying power and reviving markets. . . . which have been dormant for the past three years."

Green conveniently forgets that workers are not employed because the capitalists have closed the industries, or greatly curtailed operations (85 per cent of all workers employed are working part time) because of lack of markets, due to the contradictions of the capitalist system itself.

THE POLICY OF COALITION AND THE SOCIAL FASCISTS

The "immediate problem" is *not* finding work but the feeding, clothing and housing of the unemployed millions and their dependents. Unemployment insurance for every unemployed worker, Negro and white, native and foreign born, male and female, youth and adults, at the expense of the government and the employers is the answer to the *immediate problem.*

Green said on September 30, 1930, that unemployment insurance was the "dole system."

> "*The dole system,*" he said, "*embodies a vicious principle in that it attempts to provide relief by supplying only a minimum of subsistence. . . . The dole system develops a paternalism that is demoralizing.*"

In 1932 the position of Green is the same. He is opposed to anything the Hoover administration and its Wall Street masters are opposed to. But he can always dwell on the terrible conditions of the workers with a voice dripping with tears.

This, acording to Thomas, is "labor demanding action."

McGrady, legislative agent of the A. F. of L., appeared before a congresional committee the other day and talked about "*the doors being thrown wide open for revolution*" unless "something was done." This is the McGrady who, under the direction of Green and Woll, carried through police and gangster pogroms against the garment workers of New York City, smashing unions, jailing workers, appearing as a state's witness against strikers and pickets, etc.

This is "labor demanding action," according to Thomas.

The leaders of the railway brotherhoods, having just put over

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the wage cut on their membership by a series of tricks and chicaneries that would shame a fascist diplomat, likewise addressed a letter to Hoover and Congress, "warning" of the serious situation.

All these maneuvers, statements, warnings, etc., have the one purpose in common of convincing workers that these agents of the capitalist class are really trying to "do something" for the millions of unemployed and part time workers upon whom the burden of the crisis weighs heavier each day, and to convince workers that the government will actually "do something" for them *without their organizing and waging a militant struggle for unemployment insurance, immediate cash relief, and against all forms of suppression and terrorism now ravaging the ranks of the working class.*

But most of all these maneuvers are designed *to prevent workers breaking with the capitalist parties* and waging their struggles under the banner of the Communist Party of the United States, in this year of a presidential campaign, and in the future.

The policy of "coalition" is intended to keep the capitalist ranks solid against the working class, the ruined and bankrupt farmers, against the Negro masses. There can be no doubt that an intensive mobilization of all forces for this purpose is being carried out.

It is this light that the proposal of Nicholas Murray Butler for a "liberal" party is to be interpreted. Speaking to the National Industrial Conference Board in New York City on May 20 he said:

> "What a splendid break with tradition it would make if the twentieth Republican National Convention should take action similar to that taken by the sixteenth and appoint a committee of conference to meet a like committee to be designated by the Democratic National Convention, which is to meet a few days later, and then take a recess to await the results! Suppose, further, that as a result of such conference there might be substantial agreement on the part of a majority of each of those two bodies as to declarations!"

Alfred E. Smith spoke in a similar vein, declaring it "*the patriotic duty of every member of Congress from now until adjournment to discourage in every possible way all blocs, cabals, insurgencies and mugwump tactics, by whatever name they may be called, which bedevil legislation, increase the depression, unsettle business and endanger our credit at home and abroad.*"

Smith stated further, and the enthusiastic letters approving his statement in the capitalist press, and the practically unanimous editorial endorsement, show that he struck a responsive chord in the breasts of the capitalist class alarmed by the popularity of the slogan "*soak the rich*" which a few "progressives" raised but summarily abandoned when their wealthy masters spoke:

"*I would strongly recommend that the president be given a free*

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hand to provide federal aid for productive public works." Still further from Smith's gems of oratory: "*You cannot soak capital without soaking labor . . . they are bound together . . . the success of the one means the success of the other, etc.*

Smith not only calls for support of Hoover but, most important of all for the millions of hungry workers and their dependents, he wants to put the sole power of giving, or refusing, government relief in the hands of Hoover, who has opposed all forms of federal relief from the beginning of the crisis and who still opposes federal aid directly to the unemployed.

But this policy of more open joint action against the masses under the plea of "national emergency," "an emergency greater than that of the world war," etc., creates additional difficulties for the ruling class which even their trade union demagogues, the united front of the Socialist Party, Musteites, Lovestone and Cannon renegades against the Communist Party cannot overcome.

There is the question of the imperialist attacks on the Soviet Union. Here the Socialist Party renders yeoman service to imperialism, here its policy of "democracy" is seen to be counter-revolution. "*All of us want to see the ruthlessness of the Russian dictatorship ended,*" says Norman Thomas in the *New Leader* for May 21.

This is what Matthew Woll says, this is what the white guards say, this is the *great indictment* of the Soviet Union from all capitalist quarters. At the same time American capitalist dictatorship, with the richest country in the world swarming with hungry workers, men, women and children, escapes from Thomas with the approving remark that "*Washington moves toward federal unemployment relief not only by direct aid but by public works.*"

Recognition of the Soviet Union is now raised in the halls of Congress and by many influential papers. The Socialist Party calls for recognition of the Soviet Union. It tells workers, in its convention resolution, to "be on guard against attacks" on the Soviet Union. At the same time it demands the release of "political prisoners" and "restoration of civil liberties" in the Soviet Union. Norman Thomas says—Hoover "desires peace." (*Herald-Tribune*, May 23.)

Comrade Molotov said at the 17th Party Conference of the C.P.S.U. that it was characteristic of the present moment that as time goes on it becomes more and more difficult to say where a state of peace ends and war begins. The ruling class with the most active assistance of social-fascist leaders, are adopting the tactic of the "peaceful transition" to war. . . . The transition begins with the reconstruction of industry to serve war purposes and the systematic despatch of munitions to Japan." (*Communist International*, No. 6.) Side by side with this sly extension of the "*peace offensive*"

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of American imperialism, go the war preparations, moral, technical and political, some of which we have already pointed out.

There is great mass support for the Soviet Union—"the land without unemployment" and of Socialist construction. We must see to it that the enemies of the Soviet Union, by their coalition tactics and other methods, are unable to use the question of official recognition to choke off the revolutionary struggle of American workers for the defense of the Soviet Union and the Chinese people against Japanese imperialism and its American inperialist backers.

The coalition tactics serve further to expose the essential unity of purpose and role of the Democratic and Republican parties, with the Socialist Party benevolently covering their maneuvers with the veil of verbal struggle against capitalism, while at the same time always inveighing against the Soviet Union and the proletarian dictatorship, the only method by which the social revolution can be achieved.

THE SHARPEST STRUGGLE AGAINST SOCIAL FASCISM

The striking contrast between the conditions of the workers in the Soviet Union and those of American workers, the constant deepening of the crisis, the ruin of hundreds of thousands of small businessmen, the inability of hundreds of thousands of professional and technical workers to find employment, the obvious fact that the control of natural resources, machinery, transportation, etc., because of the crisis and the manipulations of the financiers under government direction is passing *more rapidly and decisively than ever before into the hands of a small group of the biggest finance-capitalists, is disillusioning masses of workers, as well as large numbers of the farming and lower middle class population with the big parties of capitalism.*

There is great stirring and ferment among intellectuals. There is an enormous amount said and written about "planned economy," about the necessity for "sweeping social changes," there is much questioning of the right of capitalism to survive, to demand further support at the expense of the toiling population.

The Musteites, with their propaganda for "an all inclusive labor party," are making a direct appeal to this disillusionment. From the Socialist Party they get a certain amount of support. There is little doubt that the Socialist Party, or a considerable section of it, would enter into such an organization if it acquired a mass character.

Such maneuvers are designed to divert the attention of the working class from the revolutionary struggle led by the Communist Party; *they are designed to furnish a safety valve for capitalism* and as the crisis deepens it will be found that the capitalist press,

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like the *New York Times* and Scripps-McRae papers which now give more or less outright support to Norman Thomas and the Socialist Party, will find a formula for "critical" support of a break from the Republican and Democratic parties.

The severe inner conflicts in the two big capitalist parties which they are now trying to solve by a combination of coalition and demagogy will be unlikely to result this year in a break of substantial proportions, yet such is the speed with which the crisis is developing, so rapid is the rate at which living conditions of great masses are becoming intolerable, that organizational breaks may occur, led by demagogues who find their support among farming and city middle class elements already ruined, or in process of being ruined by the crisis, from workers who still have faith in capitalism and the belief that it needs only making over and patching up—the social base of the so-called progressives of the two big capitalist parties, of the Socialist Party, and of the "all inclusive labor party" program of the Musteites.

The two-party governmental system of American capitalism will remain as the form of the capitalist dictatorship during this present period; but its formerly firm mass base is being weakened and narrowed as a result of the devastating effects of the crisis. The dictatorship is assuming a more open form as a result of the sharp inner differences reflecting degrees of divergence in economic interest, divergence of opinion as to the best methods of proceeding against the masses of American workers, against the Soviet Union and the imperialist rivals of Wall Street government.

The formation of a new political party out of social elements formerly supporting Republican and Democratic parties would mean, not *more* democracy as the "liberals" say, but a *tightening* of the dictatorship together with the creation of more illusions regarding the possibility of decisive improvement of the conditions of the masses within the framework of capitalism.

It is within the bounds of possibility that the fiction of capitalist democracy may be strengthened after the election by the inclusion of a coalition opposition of Socialist Party candidates, "progressives," Farmer-Laborites, etc., in Congress and some state legislatures.

The two-party system will remain, however, as long as it constitutes an effective weapon against the masses. To what extent its effectiveness has been weakened by the crisis will be shown partly during the course of the coming election struggles.

It is our task in this election struggle to bring our program to the workers and poor farmers with such energy and clarity that we prevent masses being fooled by the "left" phrases and maneuvers of their class enemies.

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The very center of our campaign must be the exposure of the two-party machine in all its ramifications, of their Socialist Party and Musteite scouts and "intelligence service" in the ranks of the working class. The Socialist Party must be exposed both by explanation of its words and by contrasting words with deeds.

The Fourteenth Plenum resolution says on this point:

> "The sharpest struggle against social fascism during the elections is of the greatest importance. Without detracting the attention to the slightest degree from the struggle against the republicans and democrats as pointed out above, the *chief attention* must be directed to unmasking and combatting the socialists and the Muste crowd. This also includes a consistent unmasking of their demagogic theory about state capitalism, gradual 'transition into Socialism,' through 'nationalization' projects of the mines, railroads, etc."

The Socialist Party convention, which has now confirmed by its acts the above estimate, must be the subject of a pamphlet for mass circulation in which we prove that it gave exactly the kind of aid to American imperialism and imperialist attacks on the Soviet Union by its resolution and slanders about "civil liberties" and "political prisoners" in the Socialist fatherland, that the ruling class desired, while at the same moment professing friendship and support for the Soviet Union.

In line with the above directives, in all election struggles, locally and nationally, we must blast the pretensions of the Socialist Party that it is a party of the working class and show that its program is dictated by the needs of American imperialism in this period of deepest crisis and imperialist war preparations.

Against the coalition tactics against the working class, against "national emergency," against the demagogues and demagogy, we put the struggle of the masses against imperialist war; against the plea to balance the budget at the expense of the masses we put the demand for workers unemployment insurance at the expense of the government and the employers; against the attacks on the Soviet Union and the war on the Chinese people we put the organization of mass struggle for defense of the Soviet Union and the Chinese people in the most concrete form.

These are the acid tests which the Socialist Party demagogues and their masters in the two-party government machine cannot pass with the eyes of the working class upon them—providing we work correctly in carrying through the decisions of the 14th Plenum of our Central Committee in the election struggle and all our mass work into which we must bring clearly and constantly the revolutionary way out of the crisis and for defeat of the imperialist war program.

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The Second Five-Year Plan

By MOISSAYE J. OLGIN

> "The fundamental political task of the second five-year plan is the final liquidation of capitalist elements and classes generally, the complete abolition of the causes that generate class distinctions and exploitation and the overcoming of the survivals of capitalism in economy and in the consciousness of humans, the transformation of the entire working population of the country into conscious and active builders of a classless socialist society."

This is how the political task of the second five-year plan is defined in a resolution of the Seventeenth Conference of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union which worked out directives for the construction of the plan to be finally adopted and put in operation by the Seventeenth Congress of the Party. The new plan is to embrace the period 1933-1937, but Comrade Kosior was right when he said at the conference that "as a matter of fact, we are beginning the (second) five-year plan in 1932. The realization of our construction plans, of our industrial and financial plans in 1932 will to a certain degree decide the fate of the first year of the (second) five-fear plan." This is true not only concerning the year 1932, which is the year of the completion of the first five-year plan, but it is true concerning the first five-year plan as a whole. The realization of the first five-year plan made the second five-year plan possible.

TASKS OF THE FIRST FIVE-YEAR PLAN

The first five-year plan, which is being completed in four years, set out to accomplish the following tasks: (a) rapid development of industry with particular emphasis on heavy industry (production of the means of production); (b) collectivization of a part of the peasant farms (development of large-scale farming) with introduction of machine-production and other methods of scientific cultivation; (c) improvement in living conditions of the masses as a result of increased production of the means of consumption, the latter, however, to occupy a *secondary* place compared with the production of metals, fuels, chemicals, and machines; (d) increase in the number and in the social specific weight of the working class compared with the other classes; (e) curtailment of the capitalist

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sector of national economy; (f) decreasing the difference between city and village, between the workers in industry and the toilers on the land. The plan was stupendous. It staggered imagination. It aroused a howl of scorn among the capitalists and their social-fascist lackeys who declared it "chimerical." But it released a colossal wave of energy and creative enthusiasm in the Communist Party and among the masses of the workers which made realization possible.

THE ECONOMIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE FIRST FIVE-YEAR PLAN

The first five-year plan marked not only a colossal growth of *industrial production* but also the mastering, to a large extent, of modern technique and the introduction of new *kinds* of industrial production. The output of *petroleum*, which in 1925 was 7.2 million tons and in 1928, the last year before the introduction of the five-year plan, 14.0 million tons, rose in 1931 to 22.3 million tons. The output of *coal* rose from 17.6 million tons in 1925 to 35.7 million tons in 1928 and 56 million tons in 1931, with the plan for 1932 reaching 90 million tons. The output of *cast iron* for the years 1925, 1928, 1931 and 1932 respectively is 1.5, 3.4, 4.9 and 9.0 million tons. General increase in *gross production of industry* in 1929, 24.3%; in 1930, 25.8%; in 1931, 21.1%, the increases in heavy industry being from 24% to 40%. *Machine production* rose from 730 million rubles in 1925 to 1,713 million in 1928 and 4,700 million rubles in 1931, and the plan for 1932 calls for a further increase to 6,800 million rubles. In the field of *production of electric energy* the increase was from 3.5 billion kilowatt-hours in 1926 and 5 billion kilowatt-hours in 1928 to 17 billion kilowatt-hours in 1932. The full five-year program was completed in 1931 for petroleum, the machine-building industry and the electrical industry; the whole program will be completed and partly exceeded in its major parts by the end of the current year.

Industrial expansion was accompanied by the construction of *giant plants* equaling or surpassing industrial giants of the West. The Dneiper power plant is to be the largest in Europe; the Magnitogorsk combination of steel, iron and chemical plants is to be the largest in the world. Between January, 1931 and January, 1932 there were put into operation the Nizhni-Novgorod automobile plant with a yearly capacity of 140,000 cars; the Charkov tractor plant with a capacity of 50,000 tractors; the Ural machine construction plant with a capacity unequaled in Europe, and dozens of

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other plants of various descriptions. Not only has industrial output grown on a scale unknown to capitalist countries but the U. S. S. R. has learned to produce hundreds of machines and appliances that were never known in Russia. The U.S.S.R. is in a position now to produce nearly all the machinery that is required to put the new five-year plan into operation.

Together with this development went the acquisition by the masses of *modern industrial technique*. "The efforts of the Party, of the organizers of industry, of the trade unionists, the shock brigaders and the best engineers and technical personnel, the efforts of the whole working class resulted in the new technique taking root on a large scale and in the mastering of new kinds of production," says the resolution of the conference.

In the field of agriculture, the original five-year plan has been greatly surpassed. The percentage of collectivized farms to the total number of peasant farms was, in 1928, 1.7%; according to the original plan it was to reach 20% at the end of 1931. Already towards the end of 1931 the collectives actually embraced 62% of the peasant farms with 79% of the cultivated area. By 1932-1933 the collectivization of the farms will be in the main completed. The number of *machine-tractor stations*, which was originally estimated to reach 1,000 by 1933, was over 3,000 by the end of 1931 and will surpass 4,000 by the end of the current year. From a land of small peasant holdings the U. S. S. R. has become the land of large farms on a scale unknown and impossible in capitalist countries. The planted area has increased. The introduction of machines, the introduction of scientific methods of cultivation resulted in a greater productivity of the soil although this is still falling behind the plan. The *industrial plant* has become one of the features of Soviet agriculture alongside with grains.

PEASANTRY CHANGED

The very complexion of the peasantry is undergoing a change. The collectivist (member of a collective farm) is developing a social outlook and habits of organized work unknown to peasants conducting individual farming. The collectivist using a machine begins to resemble an industrial worker not only in outward appearance but also in social consciousness. The exchange of labor between collective farms and mines and plants, and the bringing of the industries producing basic means of consumption closer to the sources of raw materials, tend to decrease still further the difference between peasant and worker. Five million peasants using

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machines in 1932 are an indicator of the revolutionary transformation taking place among the vast masses of the toilers of the land.

IMPROVEMENTS IN CONDITIONS OF WORKERS

The situation of the working class has undergone immense changes. From a predominantly agrarian country the U. S. S. R. has become a predominantly industrial country where the share of industry and railroads in the national income for 1932 is 57.5% while the share of agriculture is 22.9%. From occupying the second place in the production of the national wealth the workers have moved to the first place. Their number has grown to about 21 million (workers and employees), which is about twice the number of 1922 and far in excess of the original plan for 1933. The working day has been reduced to 7 hours. The wages have grown far above the original plan. Whereas according to that plan the wage aggregate for 1933 was supposed to be 15.7 billion rubles, it was 21.1 billion rubles in 1931 and will amount to 28.8 billion in 1932. The average monthly wage which was supposed to reach 95.6 rubles in 1933 has reached 108 rubles in 1932, not counting social insurance, medical aid and cultural facilities, which cost 37.3% above the wages paid in cash. The average income of the worker's family has grown 60% in 3 years in consequence of the fact that members of the family have been drawn into the shops. Unemployment, of which remnants were supposed to exist even at the completion of the first five-year plan, has disappeared. Living conditions, including housing, have improved above the original plan. The share of the workers in national income has grown from 32% in 1929 to 47% in 1932.

LIQUIDATION OF CAPITALIST ELEMENTS

At the same time the elements of capitalism, the *kulak* in the village and the *nepman* in the city, have been largely liquidated. The liquidation of the kulak as a class removed one of the greatest strongholds of private ownership and exploitation in the village. The improvement in the work of the cooperatives made the situation of the city merchant untenable. The total share of the private sector in national economy which was 47.3% in 1928 and 38.9% in 1929, shrank to 18.5% in 1931 and to 9.3% in 1932. With the total elimination of the kulak class in conseqnence of full collectivization of agriculture, the share of the private sector

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of national economy, and the economic role of private ownership, will have sunk into insignificance.

FOUNDATION OF SOCIALISM COMPLETED

The first five-year plan, carried out relentlessly by the Communist Party and the proletariat in merciless struggle against the right and "left" mouthpieces of the petty bourgeoisie and the kulaks, completed the foundation of Socialism in the U. S. S. R. It gave a decisive answer to the question posed by Lenin with the introduction of the N. E. P., "Who—Whom?"* It not only modernized industry and expanded it with a tempo unknown in history but it created Socialist agriculture on a colossal scale, made it predominant in agricultural production and allied it with Socialist industry, simultaneously changing the very nature of the peasants. It has aroused millions of workers to a realization of the historical significance of the work being accomplished, the workers responding by becoming *shock brigaders* (1,300,000 in 1930, 4,000,000 in 1932) and by developing on a large scale *Socialist competition*. In changing the material and social conditions of the country the workers kept on changing themselves. Through the acquistion of knowledge and technical skill by millions of workers, through the acquisition of experience in management and administration, the beginning was made for the liquidation of the difference between manual and intellectual labor. The number of workers and peasants graduating this year from high institutions of learning is 56,000, from technical schools (technicums) 175,000, from workers' faculties 121,000, from factory schools (for youth between the ages of 14 and 18) 364,000. The number of adult workers attending study groups in 1931 while engaged in their factories was 1,600,000.

Under the first five-year plan the U. S. S. R. made a gigantic step forward on the road to total abolition of private property and exploitation, to Socialist production in industry and agriculture, to the abolition of the difference between worker and peasant, to a classless society, to Socialism. "If at the time of working out the first five-year plan," said Comrade Grinko at the Seventeenth Conference, "the Leninist teaching about building Socialism in our country, a teaching developed and supplemented with tremendous power by Comrade Stalin, was only beginning really to penetrate the masses and to get hold of them as the most popular and favored idea, today this idea is actually moving millions, tens of millions of toilers in our country."

* The famous formulation of Lenin, meaning *who* will conquer *whom*: Socialism—Capitalism—or vice versa.—*Editors.*

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FURTHER INDUSTRIALIZATION—WITH BOLSHEVIK TEMPO

It is on the basis of the achievements of the first five-year plan that the second five-year plan is being built. The second is a logical sequence of the first, developed with a sense of reality and a daring characteristic of Bolsheviks only. "Our power lies in the full clarity and soberness with which we take stock of *all* existing class forces, both in Russia and abroad, and then in the resultant iron energy, firmness, decisiveness and abandon with which we conduct the struggles." These words of Lenin are best adapted to the second five-year plan. It is a sober plan because it is built on the solid foundation of a very accurate account-taking of *all* the material and social forces extant; at the same time, however, it is a plan that calls for all the Bolshevik energy, firmness, decisiveness and abandon-in-struggle of millions upon millions of toilers.

The tempo of *industrial production* is to be continued in the second five-year plan undiminished. Yearly increases in production are to be about 20%, making the total industrial output for 1937 about 2.5 times that of 1932. The output of *pig iron* is to be 22 million tons, as against 9 million tons in 1932. This will give the U. S. S. R. the first place in Europe in the production of iron and steel, leaving it only behind the U. S. A. (production of pig iron at the height of prosperity, in Germany 13.3 million tons, in France 10 million, England 7 million, U. S. A. 43 million tons). The output of *coal* in 1937 is to be 250 million tons as against 90 million tons in 1932. This is nearly equal to what England produced in 1929 (260 million tons), surpassing all other European countries and yielding only to the U. S. A. (546 million tons in 1929). The output of *petroleum* will be about 80-90 million tons, making the U. S. S. R. second only to the U. S. A. The output of *machines* is to increase 3 to 3.5 times, giving the U.S.S.R. first place after the U. S. A. in the amount of production and possibly the first place in the world as far as machine-building technique is concerned. The production of *tractors*, counting only existing plants and the Cheliabinsk plant under construction, will amount to 170,000 in 1937, which is more than the production of all European countries combined but still less than the 1929 production of the U. S. A., which was 229,000 tractors. The *chemical industry* is to undergo a tremendous development and reconstruction, making the U. S. S. R. one of the leading countries in the production of chemicals, especially artificial fertilizer. In production of super-phosphates and nitrates it may even surpass the U. S. A. The production of *electric* energy, which is to reach 17 billion kilowatt-hours in 1932, will

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amount to 100 billion kilowatt-hours in 1937 which will nearly equal the 1929 production of the U. S. A.

This will mean that national income in 1937 will be doubled compared with 1932 and that the mass consumption of food, clothing and other necessities will increase in 1937 2 to 3 times compared with 1932.

Industrial expansion necessitates, first, opening up of new mines and plants; second, introduction of new branches of production hitherto unknown in the U. S. S. R.; third, acquisition of new methods of work; fourth, reconstruction of some of the existing industrial establishments; fifth, the expansion and improvement of railroads, waterways and roads. All this is provided in the second five-year plan as may be evident from the few following examples:

INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION

The machine is to play the leading role in the reconstruction of the entire national economy. Work is to be mechanized everywhere, not only for the higher stages of production but also for those where manual labor prevails, like mining, the lumber industry, and building construction. This is necessary not only in order to speed up production but also in order to be able to produce more goods with fewer workers, it being evident that with the total disappearance of unemployment and with the tremendous increase in industrial activities it will only be possible to man the industries partly by replacing workers with machines, and partly by engaging collective farmers. On the other hand, work demanding great physical exertion may not be able to secure enough workers unless production is made easier and more attractive by the application of machines. Particular attention is to be paid to machinery required in the heavy industry, in electrification, in agriculture and transportation. New plants for the production of various machines, for the building of electrical locomotives, for the building of steam locomotives and cars, for the production of mine equipment and agricultural machinery, shipyards and plants for aviation equipment, together with the already existing and functioning foundries, rolling mills, etc., will allow the country to produce all the equipment necessary to put industry on a new basis.

The production and use of *electric current* is to be a major feature of the second five-year plan. Entire regions will be included in a network of power stations, in the first place the Dneiper region, the Don Basin, Northern Caucasus, the Urals, the Moscow, Ivanovo-

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Voznesensk and Leningrad regions. Water power is to be used for this purpose alongside with fuel. Two new dams will be built on the Volga with immense power stations. Electricity is to play a leading part also in the new industries to be developed: electro-chemistry and electro-metallurgy.

In the field of *chemical industry*, a total reconstruction and immense expansion is planned. The production of nitrates, phosphates and other chemicals partly as by-products of other industries, the production of petroleum out of brown coal, the development of the apatites of the Kola Peninsula, particularly in connection with nepheline (production of aluminum, of ingredients for the production of glass and cement, saturation of fabrics with waterproof substances, etc.) are to introduce a revolution in this industry which hitherto has lagged behind. Not the least part in chemical industry is to be the production of fertilizer and synthetic fabrics. In the production of fertilizer the U. S. S. R. is to occupy the foremost place not only in Europe but in the world, leaving the U. S. A. behind.

The *railroads* are to undergo an expansion and reconstruction. New 25,000 to 30,000 miles of tracks are to be added; scores of bridges are to be built over the main waterways; new heavy locomotives and cars are to be introduced, which in places will require a reconstruction of the whole road; many systems are to be entirely electrified; railroad work is to be thoroughly mechanized. New railroads are to link the center with the most distant provinces and national republics, thus materially aiding to the industrial growth of the latter.

"Electrification of railroad systems," said Comrade Kuibyshev in his report at the conference, "is no more a dream, it is an urgent necessity, a demand of the present day. We cannot get along without it on certain sections of our railroads." The leading role of machine construction in relation to the railway system need not be emphasized.

Non-ferrous metals are to become one of the very important elements of the second five-year plan. The country is rich with non-ferrous and precious metals. New deposits of such metals are being discovered every year. Copper, zinc, lead, aluminum are to be produced in quantities far exceeding the present standards. This will require the introduction of entirely new technological processes, new methods of production. Attention will be directed towards the utilization of polymetallic ores or ores containing more than one metal. Metals not very widespread in the U. S. S. R. at present, like nickel, magnesium, beryllium, will be developed.

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The *light industry* (production of the means of consumption) will be placed in a different position compared with its position in the first five-year plan. The building up of the foundation of the whole industrial structure—iron, steel, fuel, the vast development and perfection of machine building, the great increase in the production of raw materials like cotton, flax, sugar-beets, etc., aside from the production of cereals and other foodstuffs and the development of cattle breeding, fisheries, etc., will make it possible to increase the production of consumers' goods in a ratio not lower than the general increase in industrial production and in parts above it. This will make it possible to satisfy the material and cultural needs of the masses in a measure unknown in history.

> "On the basis of liquidating the parasitic class elements," says the resolution of the conference, "and of the general growth of national income which is placed entirely at the disposal of the toilers, there must be achieved a considerably faster increase in the material well-being of the workers and peasant masses and at the same time a decisive improvement in the entire housing and communal system in the U.S.S.R. The conference proceeds from the assumption that by the end of the second five-year plan the population should be supplied with basic consumers' goods, including foodstuffs, in quantities exceeding no less than two to three times those of the end of the first five-year plan."

AGRICULTURE ON A NEW BASIS

From the foregoing it is obvious that *agriculture* will undergo material changes both in the quantity and orientation of production. With a peasant population completely organized in collective farms, with machine-tractor stations introduced everywhere, which means the thorough mechanization of work and the application of modern science to every phase of agriculture, the soil will produce all the foodstuffs and raw material necessary for the realization of the five-year plan. The conference pointed out the following major tasks: (1) make agricultural production more secure and more stable in areas subjected to droughts (Middle and Lower Volga, Ural, Kazakstan, Siberia); (2) develop grain-producing areas in regions where the population hitherto lived on grain imported from other regions; (3) move grain production eastward, to Siberia and the Far East region, so as to make these territories self-sustaining; (4) increase the output per acre.

While the *planted area* is also to increase considerably in the second five-year plan (from 143 million hectars in 1932 to 160-170 million in 1937), the main stress is to be put on the *increase in crops*. This was declared by the conference to be "the central and decisive

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task." Grain crops are to increase during the second five-year plan no less than 40 per cent.

In the field of agriculture, the *Soviet farms* are to be models of socialized organization of work and production, examples of application to agriculture of high machine technique and all the acquisitions of agronomical science.

REGROUPING OF INDUSTRIES

This momentous plan requires a considerable *regrouping of the industries geographically*. The first five-year plan was to a considerable extent bound by the inheritance of the past, by irrational and unscientific placing of the industries (metallurgy in Moscow, away from the sources of iron and coal; textiles in Ivanovo-Vosnesensk, away from the cotton fields). The second five-year plan undertakes (1) to organize industries nearer to the sources of raw materials and (2) to develop local natural resources in every direction so as to make the organization of *gigantic industrial combines* both possible and profitable.

Total national income for 1933-1937 is estimated at 500 billion rubles. Total capital investments for 5 years are to reach 140-150 billions. Such a colossal plan of development can be carried out only if industries are distributed geographically in such a manner as to yield the greatest possible results. While the resolution of the conference itself takes into account the major possibilities of every region and every district, it is understood that the general plan will be supplemented by and based upon *local regional plans*. It is understood also that separate regions will undertake to exceed their quota of the general plan and that they will challenge other regions in Socialist competition.

While it is impossible in this connection even to outline the major industrial regions and the contemplated changes in their economic complexion as discussed and decided at the conference, one or two examples must be quoted.

The *Far Eastern Region* which developed slowly during the life of the first five-year plan must quicken the tempo of industrial growth. It is to build a local metallurgical plant to use only local materials, thus freeing the region from dependence upon the Ural metallurgy. It is to develop a powerful shipbuilding industry for river and ocean navigation. It is to develop a system of roads and aerial transportation. Its fisheries and canneries are to be greatly developed. At the same time it is to introduce in agriculture, in addition to the now prevailing grain production, also the cultivation of

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flax, hemp, sugar beets and to build sugar refineries, flax spinneries, etc. It is to develop the production of non-ferrous metals and gold, to increase the production of coal (10-12 million tons annually) and of petroleum (Sakhalin). It is also to make use of its tremendous wealth of timber, which includes also the construction of paper mills. It is to develop the fur industry. In order to be able to utilize all the great natural resources of the Far East Region it will be necessary to induce large numbers of workers and peasants from other more populated regions to migrate to the Far East. The region is to be made over. New life is to stir in this outlying section of the Union.

Central Asia (Usbekistan, Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan, Kirgisia and Kara-Kalpakia) is another example. The region is to be transformed from a backward country (a colony under the tsar) into the chief source of cotton for the U.S.S.R., at the same time becoming a leading industrial center not only supplying the local population with a sufficient quantity of basic consumers' goods, but also delivering its manufactures to other sections of the Union. Coal, petroleum, and water power; copper, zinc and lead; nitrates; sulphur, mercury, asbestos, barium, strychnine, molybdenium, lapis-lazuli, helium are to be among the leading industries. The silk-worm and the rubber plant are to be developed in addition to the production of cotton. Cattle breeding is to supply the raw material for a great woolen industry. Cotton mills, silk mills, sugar refineries, canneries, etc., are to reach gigantic proportions. This will necessitate the construction of new railroad lines.

On the basis of the first five-year plan, with the aid of the entire working population under the leadership of the Communist Party and its Central Committee, the second five-year plan, applying the most recent achievements of science and technology to the vast natural resources of the country, will fundamentally remodel and tremendously increase the entire economic structure, for the first time in history making the whole country a place fit to live in for the whole working population which by that time will have rid itself of the remnants of the non-working (exploiting) classes.

SOCIALIST SOCIETY IN THE MAKING

What will be the complexion of the society that will emerge from the second five-year plan? According to the resolution of the conference it should be a society that finally has liquidated the capitalist elements and classes generally and that has abolished the causes that generate class distinctions and exploitation. Taking into ac-

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count the achievements of the first five-year plan it is obvious that there can be no fundamental hindrances preventing the realization of these tasks. The private producer, whether as individual artisan or as individual peasant, will have disappeared; the private trader will have discontinued his "business." All of those elements will have been drawn into collective work on the collective means of production whether as factory workers, as workers in state farms or as members of collective farms. Capitalist classes and capitalist elements will thus have been liquidated. The abolition of private property will mean the abolition of the causes that generate class distinctions and exploitation. Outright exploitation of man by man will have ceased. But this does not mean that class distinction and class difference will have entirely disappeared. He who thinks so only tends to demobilize the Party and the proletariat in their struggle for a classless society.

REMNANTS OF CLASS DISTINCTIONS

Capitalist classes and capitalist elements will have been liquidated, but the difference between city and village, between industrial worker and peasants will to a certain extent still remain. Similarity between the worker at the bench and the machine-using member of the collective farm will have greatly increased not only in outward appearance but also in outlook, yet a *certain* distinction will not have disappeared. The member of the collective farm will be in a somewhat different position economically. The factory worker is working directly for the state; the member of a collective farm works directly for his collective whose income he shares. The factory worker owns no property except his means of consumption; the member of a collective farm may still own his house, his vegetable garden or his fowls. True, during the life of the second five-year plan millions of collective farm members will become members of "communes" where private property in the means of production will have almost entirely disappeared, yet even the highest stage of the collective farms, much as it makes its member a conscious builder of Socialism and close as it is to the type of a state farm, still differs from a pure-and-simple state-owned enterprise inasmuch as the "commune," juridically at least, is not the property of the state but of its membership collectively.

FIGHTS AHEAD

These distinctions, tending fast to disappear, will still linger even after the completion of the second five-year plan, which means that

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during the life of this plan the Communist Party, the proletariat and the conscious elements among the peasantry will have to conduct a strenuous fight against remnants of proprietary tendencies, against kulak influences that will manifest themselves here and there, for a correct line of further collectivization and for lifting the collectives to a higher plane; most particularly, however, will they have to fight for a correct organization and distribution of work and for a proper distribution of the product.

The work in the collectives has already been organized on a socialist basis. Yet this is only a beginning. To put the right man in the right place and to stimulate his production is the most urgent problem of the present. This in turn requires the organization of *cost-accounting brigades* (teams) with responsible heads and clearly defined spheres of work making possible an account of outlays and income and yielding the participants a reward corresponding to the work. This raises the all-embracing problem of the methods of payment for work.

MORE PAY FOR MORE AND BETTER WORK

There is a tendency among petty-bourgeois elements, who by themselves are not producers, to look upon Socialism from the consumers' point of view. Theirs is often the ideal of *Socialism of consumption, i.e.*, equal distribution of commodities among the population regardless of individual production. This ideal, which does not wish to reckon with the actual conditions of production, is branded by the creators of the second five-year plan as "petty-bourgeois equalitarianism" inimical to the building up of Socialism. The point is stressed that under Communism, which is, according to Marx and Lenin, the *higher* stage of Socialism, everybody will work according to his capacities and receive according to his wants. But such absence of any relationship between individual production and consumption presupposes conditions which will not yet exist during the second five-year plan; its introduction would therefore be harmful on this stage of Socialist construction. The struggles of the Party and of all conscious elements in this respect during the second five-year plan will be a continuation of the struggle already begun in 1931, *viz.*, a struggle for the rule that *work is paid according to quality and quantity* both in industry and agriculture. "Better pay for more and better work" means giving each producer in proportion to what he has actually produced. It entails a factual inequality but not an injustice. Payment of this kind has proved a powerful stimulus for the general improvement of work, a powerful inducement for the individual worker to improve his qualifications.

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The struggle in the collective farms against remnants of kulak influence, against petty-bourgeois equalitarianism, for payment according to quality and quantity of work, for better organization of labor, for lifting the whole of agriculture to a level where, in the words of the conference, "agricultural labor is transformed into a variety of industrial labor"—such are the tasks confronting the Party and all conscious elements in the field of agriculture. This indicates sharply that the second five-year plan is not a period of relaxation, of relinquishing struggle, of letting things drift. On the contrary, it is a period of heightened struggles on a new basis.

The same holds true about industry. The working class is to grow tremendously during the second five-year plan. There are to be about 36 million members of labor unions. There is to be a vast increase in the skill, knowledge and class-consciousness of the workers. There is to be an immense growth of the number of shock brigades and of Socialist competition. There is to be a wave of creative energy and enthusiasm commensurate only with the greatness of the historical task. Yet he who thinks that everything will "run smoothly" even among the workers only weakens the watchfulness and the mobilization of the Party. There will be survivals to be combated—survivals of bourgeois psychology, of bourgeois grabbing proclivities, of bourgeois selfish attitude towards common work and common goods. There will be tendencies to overcome—tendencies of petty-bourgeois equalitarianism, tendencies to retard the pace of upbuilding—all inherited from the city capitalists or the kulaks although these classes as such will have been completely eliminated.

There will be a relentless struggle against the right and the "left." The right opportunists will tend to fight against the Bolshevik tempo, against the plan generally or in part, against the reorganization of work on a new basis, as they are fighting during the first five-year plan, actually capitulating before the bourgeoisie and the kulaks. The "left" opportunists preach petty-bourgeois equalitarianism, they demand exchange of goods instead of the exchange for money, they insist on disarming organizationally and ideologically where the struggle has to be continued with more vigor. "Left" opportunism of the Trotsky variety, which insists on the impossibility of building Socialism in one country and on the restoration of capitalism, says the conference, "has now turned into the advance detachment of bourgeois counter-revolution." While the fight against *both* kinds of opportunism is vital, the conference pointed out that right opportunism remains the main danger "because it reflects the kulak danger, and the kulak danger at the present moment, the

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moment of an offensive all along the line and an eradicating of the roots of capitalism, is the main danger in the country." (Stalin.)

It is needless to say that the struggle for the *defense of the Soviet Union* against aggression from without and counter-revolutionary plots fostered by the capitalist countries within will continue.

THE STATE

The state therefore will still remain. In a classless society, according to Marx and Lenin, the state will become superfluous; it will "wither away." But this relates only to complete Communism. In Communism, said Lenin, "the state dies off inasmuch as there are no capitalists, there are no classes, and there is consequently no necessity of *suppressing* a certain *class*." "But," he warns, "as long as the 'highest' stage of Communism has not arrived, the socialists demand the strictest control on the part of society *and on the part of the state* over the measure of work and the measure of consumption."

The state will remain because Socialism, according to Stalin, is the transition period from the dictatorship of the proletariat to full Communism. Functions of power, of coercion, of law will therefore still remain. Only after the re-education of vast millions will have been accomplished, only after the remnants of bourgeois class habits and class practices will have been eradicated, will it be possible for the state to become obsolete and disappear.

VINDICATION OF MARXISM-LENINISM

The second five-year plan is, even more than the first, the absolute vindication of Marxism-Leninism. Tendencies discovered by Marx and Engels in the 'forties of the nineteenth century, plans laid out by Lenin in the early period of the revolution are now being realized in the practical program of eliminating the remnants of capitalism and building a classless society. The *stages* of development, the interrelation of forces, the role of the state—all have been predicted by Marxism-Leninism.

The second five-year plan will not only raise the material conditions of the masses above everything known in Europe but it will stimulate a powerful growth of proletarian culture. *Cadres* will be developed; general and technical education will make tremendous strides. Science will flourish. The U. S. S. R. will become even more than it is at present the revolutionizing center for the workers of the world.

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THE PLAN IS REAL

The plan is real. So far it exists only in the form of directives. But these directives are capable of fulfillment. The natural resources, the social forces and the necessary leadership are there. The plan will be elaborated and put into operation. The conference was right when it said it was "unshakably convinced that the working class and the masses of collective farmers will find in the organizations of the Communists, the Young Communists, the Unions and the Soviets, the Bolshevik organizers and leaders of a victorious struggle for the realization of the second five-year plan."

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Marxism and the National Problem

By J. STALIN

III.—FORMULATION OF THE QUESTION

A NATION has the right freely to determine its own fate. It has the right to fashion its structure as it likes, while not encroaching, of course, on the rights of other nations. This is indisputable. But in what precise way ought it to fashion its structure, *what forms* ought it to adopt for its future constitution, taking into account the interests of the majority of the nation, and above all, of the proletariat?

A nation has the right to build its structure on the basis of autonomy. It has the right even of separation. But this does not mean that it must act in this way under all conditions, or that autonomy or separation will everywhere and at all times be favorable for the nation, *i.e.*, for the majority of its population, *i.e.*, the toiling strata. The Trans-Caucasian Tartars might assemble, let us suppose, as a nation in their Seim (Parliament) and being subject to the influence of their boyars and mullahs decide to resurrect the old forms of society, decide on separation from the State. According to the meaning of the point about self-determination they have a perfect right to do this. But will this be in the interests of the toiling strata of the Tartar nation? Can Social Democracy regard it with indifference if the boyars and mullahs leading the masses in their wake adopt such a solution of the national question? Ought not Social Democracy to interfere in the matter and in a definite manner exert its influence on the will of the nation? Ought it not to come forward with concrete plans for a solution of the question, a solution most advantageous for the Tartar masses?

But what kind of solution would most of all coincide with the interests of the toiling masses? Autonomy, federation or separation?

All these are questions the decision of which depends on the concrete historical conditions in which the given nation finds itself. More than this, these conditions, as always occurs, alter and a decision which is correct at one particular time may prove to be completely unsuitable at another.

During half of the nineteenth century, Marx was a supporter of the separation of Russian Poland, and he was correct, for the ques-

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tion as it then stood was one of the emancipation of a higher culture from its destruction by a lower. The question stood in this way at that time not only from the point of view of theory, not academically, but in practice, in life itself.

At the end of the nineteenth century the Marxists were already expressing themselves against the separation of Poland, and they were also correct, for during the last fifty years deep-seated changes have taken place in regard to the economic and cultural rapproachment of Russia and Poland. Moreover, by this time the question of separation has been converted from a subject for practice into a subject for academic disputes, practically affecting only the intellectuals abroad. This by no means excludes the possibility, of course, of the coming about of definite internal and external conditions in which the question of the separation of Poland may again stand on the order of the day.

From this it follows that the decision of the national question is possible only in relation to all the historical conditions taken in their development.

The economic, political and cultural conditions which govern a given nation—these constitute the sole key for the solution of the question as to how exactly a particular nation should fashion its structure, what forms it ought to adopt for its future constitutions. In regard to this, it is possible that each separate nation will require a special solution of the question.

If, indeed, a dialectical formulation of the question is indispensable anywhere it is here in regard to the national question.

In view of this we must decisively reject one very widespread, very wholesale manner of "solution" of the national question which owes its inception to the Bund. We refer to the light-hearted method of reliance on Austrian and South-Slavic Social Democracy which are supposed to have already solved the national question and from whom the Russian Social Democrats are simply to borrow their solution. In regard to this, it is proposed that everything which is correct for Austria is correct also for Russia. There is lost from sight the most important and decisive factor in this particular case, the concrete historical conditions in Russia as a whole and in the life of each separate nation within the limits of Russia in particular.

Listen to what is said, for example, by the well-known member of the Bund, V. Kossovsky:

> "When at the Fourth Session of the Bund the question (the national qustion—J. S.) was discussed as one of principle, the proposal by one of the members of the Congress that the solution of the question should be in the spirit of the resolution of the South-Slavic Social Democratic Party evoked general approval. As a result

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the Congress unanimously adopted . . . national autonomy."

And that was all! No analysis of Russian actualities, nor an explanation of the conditions of life of the Jews in Russia. First they borrowed their solution from the South-Slavic Social Democratis Party, then they "approved" it and finally they "unanimously adopted" it! This is the way in which the Bund formulates and "solves" the national question in Russia.

As a matter of fact, Austria and Russia present absolutely different conditions. This explains the fact that the Social Democrats in Austria who adopted the national program at Bruenn (1899) in the spirit of the resolution of the South-Slavic Social Democratic Party (it is true with certain insignificant amendments) did not at all approach it in what we may call the Russian fashion and, of course, did not decide it in a Russian fashion.

First of all, let us note the formulation of the question. How is the question formulated by the Austrian theoreticians of national autonomy, by the interpreters of the Bruenn National Program and resolutions of the South-Slavic Social Democratic Party, Springer and Bauer?

Springer declares:

> "We shall leave here without answer the question whether a State of different nationalities is possible at all and whether, in particuar, the Austrian nationalities are compelled to establish a single political whole; these questions we shall consider as decided. For anyone who is not in agreement with the above-mentioned possibility and necessity, our investigation will, of course, appear unfounded. Our theme is as follows: granted that individual nations are *compelled* to carry on a joint existence, what are the correct forms which will give them the possibility of the best possible life. (Italics of Springer).

Thus, the state integrity of Austria is taken as the starting point. Bauer says the same thing:

> "We start from the supposition that the Austrian nations remain in the same state union in which they are at present living and we inquire what, within the limits of this union, will be the relations of the nations among themselves and of all of them towards the state.

Once again the integrity of Austria is the first duty.

Is it possible for Russian Social Democracy to formulate the question in this manner? No, it is not possible. And it is not possible for it to do so because from the very outset it bases itself on the point of view of the self-determination of nations, by virtue of which a nation has the right to complete separation. Even the mem-

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ber of the Bund, Goldblatt, recognized at the second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Party that the latter could not abandon the point of view of self-determination. Goldblatt declares:

> "Against the right to self-determination it is not permissible to raise objections. In a case where any nation is struggling for independence, it is not permissible to oppose it. If Poland does not wish to enter into 'lawful wedlock' with Russia, then it must not be interfered with by us."

But from this it follows that the starting point of the Austrian and Russian Social Democrats are not only not the same but, on the contrary, are directly opposed to one another. Is it possible after this to talk of the possibility of borrowing the national program of the Austrians?

Further, the Austrians are thinking of realizing "the freedom of small nationalities" by the path of petty reforms, by slow steps. Putting forward national autonomy as a practical measure, they absolutely leave out of account any radical transformation or the democratic-emancipatory movement which does not exist in their perspective. At the same time, the Russian Marxists connect the question of "freedom of nationalities" with a probable radical transformation, with the democratic-emancipatory movement, having no basis for counting on reforms. And this essentially alters matters as far as the probable fate of nations in Russia is concerned.

> "Of course (says Bauer) it is difficult to conceive of national autonomy appearing as the result of a deep decision, of a bold decisive action. Austria will proceed step by step towards national autonomy, by a slow and arduous process, by difficult struggle, as a result of which legislation and administration will be in a situation of chronic paralysis. Not by the path of a great legislative enactment, but by a multitude of separate laws promulgated for separate regions and separate communities will there be created the new just state structure."

Springer says the same thing. He writes:

> "I am very well aware that institutions of such a character (organs of national autonomy—K. S.) are not to be created in a single year or a single decade. The reorganization merely of the Prussian administration alone demanded a prolonged period. The Prussians required two decades for the final establishment of their basic administrative insitutions. Accordingly it can well be imagined that I cannot say how much time and what great labors will be necessary for Austria."

All this is said very definitely. But cannot the Russian Marxists connect the national question with any "bold decisive acts?" Can they count on partial reforms, on "a multitude of separate laws"

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as a means for achieving the "freedom of nationalities"? And if they cannot do so and must not do so, then is it not clear from this that the methods of struggle and the future perspectives are entirely different for the Austrians and the Russians? How is it possible in such a state of affairs to limit ourselves to the one-sided and half-hearted national autonomy of the Austrians? One of two things is true: either the adherents of "borrowing" do not count on decisive and bold actions or they do count on them but "they do not see what they are creating."

Finally, Russia and Austria are faced with entirely different immediate tasks, in view of which also different methods are dictated to them for the solution of the national question. Austria lives under conditions of parliamentarism: without a parliament, under present conditions, development there is impossible. But the parliamentary life and legislative activity of Austria is frequently brought to a complete standstill owing to the sharp conflicts of the national parties. This also explains the chronic crisis from which Austria has long been suffering. In view of this, the national question constitutes there the backbone of political life, a question of existence itself. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Austrian Social Democratic politicians attempt to solve first of all the question of these national conflicts, to solve them finally, on the basis of already existing parliamentarism by parliamentary means.

Such is not the case in Russia. In Russia, in the first place, "there is no parliament, thank God." In the second place, and this is the chief thing, the backbone of the political life of Russia is not the national but the agrarian question. Consequently the fate of the Russian question, and that means also the "emancipation" of nations, is connected in Russia with the solution of the agrarian question, *i.e.*, with the destruction of the relics of feudalism, *i.e.*, with the democratization of the country. This explains the fact that in Russia the national question arises not as an independent and decisive one, but as a part of the general and more important question of the destruction of feudalism in the country.

> "The barrenness of the Austrian parliament (writes Springer) is due purely to the fact that each reform gives rise to contradiction within the national parties, destroying their union, and the leaders of the parties consequently avoid everything which smacks of reforms. The progress of Austria is in general only thinkable if the nations are granted irremovably just positions; this will take from them the necessity of maintaining parliament sections in perpetual fighting readiness and will enable them to turn to the solution of economic and social tasks."

The same thing is said by Bauer:

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> "National peace is indispensable first of all to the state. The State absolutely cannot permit that legislation should come to a stop owing to a stupid questions about language, petty quarrels of rebellious peoples somewhere about national frontiers or about each new school that is set up."

All this is comprehensible. But it is none the less comprehensible that in Russia the national question stands on a quite different plane. Not the national but the agrarian question will decide the fate of progress in Russia, the national question is a subordinate one.

Thus we have different formulations of the question, different perspectives and methods of struggle, different immediate tasks. Is it not clear that in such a position of affairs to take example from Austria and to devote oneself to borrowing a program can only be done by people who "decide" the national question on paper outside actual space and time?

Once again, the concrete historical conditions as the starting point, the dialectical formulation of the question as the sole correct formulation—such is the key to the solution of the national question.

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Lenin Corner

LENIN ON LITERATURE

LITERATURE must become Party literature. As a counterpart to the bourgeois customs, bourgeois commercial and commercialized press, a counterpart to bourgeois literary self-seeking and individualism, "aristocratic anarchism" and money-hunting—the socialist proletariat must put forward the principle of *Party literature*, must develop this principle and carry it out in its fullest, completest form.

What does this principle of Party literature consist of? Not only in that for the socialist proletariat literature cannot be a means of gain for individual persons or groups; but that it cannot in general be an individual concern, independent of the general cause of the proletariat. Down with non-Party publicists! Down with literary supermen! Literature must become *part* of the general proletarian cause. . . .

. . . We wish to create and we shall create a free press, free not only in the sense of police interference but in the sense of being free from capital, free from self-seeking tendencies—more than that, free also from bourgeois individualism.

These last words may appear a paradox or a mockery at the readers. What! will probably exclaim some intellectual, an ardent supporter of freedom. What! You want to subject to collective control such a delicate individual work as that of literary creation. You wish that workers by a majority of votes should decide questions of science, philosophy, esthetics! You deny the absolute freedom of the absolutely individual ideological creation!

Gentlemen of the bourgeois individualists! We must tell you that your speeches about absolute freedom are sheer hypocrisy. In a society based on the power of the money bag, in a society where the masses of the toilers are destitute and a handful of the rich are idling, there can be no real, no genuine "freedom."

Are you, sir, being an author, free from your bourgeois publisher? Are you free from your bourgeois public, which demands that you should supply it with lewd pictures, with prostitution as a "supplement" to your "sacred" scenic art? Surely this absolute freedom is only a bourgeois or anarchist phrase (for anarchism, as a world conception, is the bourgeois ideology turned inside out). You cannot

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live in society and yet be free from society. The freedom of a bourgeois author, artist or actress is only a masked (or hypocritically camouflaged) dependence on the money bag, on bribes, on being provided for. And we, socialists, are exposing this hypocrisy, we tear down the false sign boards—not in order to obtain a non-class literature and art (this will only be possible in a Socialist classless society) but in order to contrast literature hypocritically free but in fact tied to the bourgeoisie, with another literature, free in reality and openly bound up with the proletariat.

This will be a free lietrature, for it is only the idea of Socialism and sympathy for the toilers, not greed and self-seeking, that will enlist more and more forces to its ranks. This will be a free literature, for it will not serve either a blase heroine or the "upper ten" thousand suffering from boredom and corpulence, but will serve millions and tens of millions of toilers, who constitute the flower of the land, its energy, its future. This will be a free literature, fertilizing the last word in the revolutionary thought of mankind by the experience and live work of the socialist proletariat, and producing a constant interaction between the experience of the past (scientific Socialism, which has consummated the development of Socialism from its primitive utopian forms) and the experience of the present (the present-day struggle of the comrade workers).

—*Novaya Zhizn, No.* 12, *Nov.* 26, 1905.

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